

Messianic and End Times Prophecy in the Bible

Research and Study by Rev. Philippe L. De Coster, B.Th., D.D.



Berea Bible Magazine Quarterly

January – March 2015 – First Issue

© 2015 Berea School of Theology and Internet Ministries, Ghent, Belgium

Messianic and End Times Prophecy in the Bible

Research and Study by Rev. Philippe L. De Coster, B.Th., D.D.

Introduction

In contrast to what many fundamentalist preachers or late-night radio seers would have you believe, biblical prophecy is *not* primarily about "predicting the future" or finding clues in the Bible that correspond to people or events in our own day and age! The prophets of Ancient Israel did *not* look into some kind of crystal ball and see events happening thousands of years after their own lifetimes. The books they wrote do *not* contain hidden coded messages for people living in the 20th or 21st centuries! They did predict the coming Messiah, in the person and divinity of Jesus Christ.

Along serious theological scholars of the past and today, biblical prophets were mainly speaking to and writing for the people of their own time. They were challenging people of their own world, especially their political rulers, to remain faithful to God's commandments and/or to repent and turn back to God if they had strayed. They were conveying messages from God, who had called or commissioned them, rather than speaking on their own initiative or authority. However, because the biblical prophets were transmitting messages on behalf of God (as Jews and Christians believe), much of what they wrote for their own time is clearly *also* relevant for people living in the modern world. The overall message of faith and repentance is timeless and applicable in all ages and cultures. To understand what **biblical prophecy** really is, let us look more closely at the origins, definitions, and uses of some *key biblical words*.

Prophecy was an element in Sumerian and Acadian religion, and prophetic ecstasy among these two races may have resembled in outward form its manifestation among the prophets of Israel. But the latter presented a phenomenon unique in the history of the world in the religious and moral content of their messages, and in the uprightness and fearlessness of their characters. From Moses onwards, until the Advent of Christ, God put His words into their mouth (Deuteronomy 18:15).

It is believed that ancient traditions have repeatedly been the main engine for the development and evolution of world religious thought. From the Hellenistic traditions in Christianity, to the Sumerian influences on the Old Testament writers, world religions have often absorbed and grown from the very cultures

that surrounded them. Despite the insistence of many that any particular world religion is completely original and without precedent, a cursory study of those societal traditions that such religions grew from may yet reveal deep cultural grains, assimilated and even renamed, but ever present in their influence.

The purpose of this part therefore is to document the now extinct religions of the world, to reveal their wealth of custom from their remaining documents, and to help place the roots of modern religions in better context.

Ultimately, such religious traditions often eventually became the very foundations that their successors built upon, the influences of ancient cultures ever pervading current civilisations of humanity in both obtuse and far more subtle ways.



Biblical Prophecies for Our Generation

"Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?'" (Matthew 24:3).

One of the greatest proofs that the Bible is inspired is the evidence of thousands of detailed prophecies that were fulfilled to the smallest particular throughout history. Centuries before the events occurred the ancient prophets foretold the

rise and fall of empires and cities including Babylon, Tyre, and Nineveh. However, in the balance of this chapter one would like to examine several astonishing prophecies that were fulfilled in our lifetime that prove the Bible's inspiration and also point to the nearness of Christ's return.

For thousands of years men have studied the Bible's ancient prophecies and wondered if they would live to witness the return of Christ to redeem the earth. Many today are longing for the return of Jesus Christ. Naturally, skeptics remind us that past generations also looked for the Second Coming but never saw the promise fulfilled. Why should we believe our generation will witness the return of Christ when other generations were disappointed? Thirty years of study of Bible prophecies have convinced me of the overwhelming evidence that Christ will likely return in our lifetime. Jesus and the other prophets described numerous prophecies that would occur in the lifetime of those who would see Him return with their own eyes. Is ours the generation that will see Christ coming for His Church? The answer to this question will have profound implications for our life, our witnessing, and our priorities.

In this chapter we will examine numerous prophecies relating to the last days and the biblical passages where the original prophecies were announced over two thousand years ago. Each of these prophecies is a unique event that was never fulfilled in any other generation. By their very nature many of these predictions could not be fulfilled again in another generation. Our Lord Jesus Christ warned,

"Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draw near" (Luke 21:28).

Let's examine in detail several of these fascinating predictions to illustrate the tremendous precision of biblical prophecies as proof that God inspired the writers of the Bible.

The Rebirth of Israel

The rebirth of Israel is one of the most extraordinary and unlikely of all the prophecies in the Bible. In an earlier portion of this book we examined the marvellous precision of the prophecy in which Ezekiel predicted that Israel would be reborn in the spring of 1948.

Jesus Christ foretold the rebirth of Israel in his famous prophecy of the "*fig tree*" budding that was recorded in Matthew's Gospel. Our Lord declared in Matthew 24:32-35: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye

shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." No other ancient nation ever ceased to exist for a period of centuries and then returned to take its place on the stage of world history.

"Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" (Isaiah 66:8).

Most nations evolved gradually over the centuries, such as Egypt or France. In the time of the ancient prophecies, no one had ever witnessed a nation being created "in one day." Yet, in his prediction, Isaiah prophesied that Israel would come into existence in "*one day*." The prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel were fulfilled precisely as predicted on May 15, 1948.

Predictions About the Present Arab-Israeli Conflict

However, the prophecies surrounding the rebirth of Israel did not stop with the declaration of Israel's independence in 1948. Three thousand years ago God inspired King David to predict that the reborn nation of Israel would be immediately surrounded by enemies, including the Arab nations of Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria.

"For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah" (Psalm 83:2-8).

In this incredible prophecy, David described the modern states of the Middle East by naming the ancient nations that have now joined with Palestinians in their attempt to destroy the Jewish state in the last days.

The Miraculous Restoration of the Hebrew Language

The prophet Zephaniah had predicted something equally impossible as the rebirth of Israel. God predicted through His prophet Zephaniah that He would restore the ancient dead language of Hebrew as the living, spoken language of

Israel. Hebrew ceased to be the common language of the Jews long before the life of Christ.

"For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent" (Zephaniah 3:9).

No other nation has ever lost its language and later recovered it. No one is speaking ancient Egyptian or Chaldee today. A Jewish scholar by the name of Eliazar ben Yehuda began working earlier in this century in Israel, in his attempt to revive the dead language of Hebrew with its original seven thousand words related to Temple worship as used by the priests. He invented thousands of new words for fountain pen, airplane, etc. Ultimately, Eliazar created modern Hebrew as the living language of five million Israelis. As the Jews began to return from seventy different nations to the Promised Land in 1948 after two thousand years of exile, the government and army began to unify these widely divergent peoples into a united people through teaching them the revived Hebrew language. The Jews of Israel will someday fulfill the prophecy of Zephaniah by calling *"upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."*

The Return of the Ethiopian Jews to Israel

The prophet Zephaniah predicted another seemingly impossible prophecy when he declared that God would return the Ethiopian Jews to the land of Israel after they were separated from their Jewish brethren for almost three thousand years. In the days of King Solomon a group of Jews from each of the twelve tribes immigrated to Ethiopia with Prince Menelik, the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, as detailed in my book Armageddon. The prophet foretold their return to their homeland in the last days in these words,

"From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering" (Zephaniah 3:10).

Another prophet, Isaiah, also confirmed this prediction.

"I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughter from the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 43:6).

Isaiah predicted the miraculous return of the Jews from both Russia (the north) and from Ethiopia (the south). In the later part of the 1980s and especially in 1991 over eighty-five thousand black Jews returned home to Israel from

Ethiopia in fulfillment of Zephaniah's ancient prophecy. Ezekiel 37:21 and numerous other prophecies foretold of the return of the exiles to the Holy Land.

The Astonishing Fertility of Israel

In addition to recovering their homeland, their lost language and their exiles, the prophet Isaiah predicted that Israel would become fertile again.

"He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit" (Isaiah 27:6).

The returning Jews have transformed the previously deserted and desolate land into the most agriculturally efficient land on earth according to the United Nations. Israel now supplies over 90 percent of the citrus fruit consumed by hundreds of millions in Europe. Another prophecy connected with Israel's return was made by the prophet Joel who declared that the desert nation of Israel would experience tremendous increases of rain in the last days.

"Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month" (Joel 2:23).

As the rainfall increased dramatically by over 10 percent every decade for the last century the returning Jewish exiles planted over two hundred million trees and transformed the complete environment of the Promised Land.

"And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes" (Isaiah 35:7).

Another curious prediction was found in Ezekiel 38 which claimed that Israel would dwell "*without walls or gates*" in the last days. In the ancient past even small villages as well as cities depended on the walls for defense against invading armies. Yet God inspired Ezekiel to record the following verse in his prophecy about the coming Russian-Arab invasion of Israel.

"And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates" (Ezekiel 38:11).

How could Ezekiel have known twenty-five centuries ago that the development of modern weapons such as bombs, airplanes and missiles, would have made

walls and gates irrelevant for defensive purposes in the last days? Even army bases and Israel's settlements in the West Bank and Gaza have no walls today.

Israel's Plans to Rebuild the Temple

The Bible contains numerous prophecies that tell us that Israel will rebuild the Temple in the last days. The prophet Isaiah wrote,

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it" (Isaiah 2:2).

In the Book of Revelation (11:1,2) John tells us that the angel took him into the future to measure the Temple that will exist during the seven-year tribulation period. The apostle Paul confirms this in his prophecy about the Antichrist occupying the future Temple.

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:3,4).

The prophet Ezekiel described his vision of the future Temple with Levites and priests worshipping God:

"And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord God, a young bullock for a sin offering" (Ezekiel 43:19).

The Oil of Anointing

One of the most unusual aspects of the ancient Tabernacle and Temple was the oil of anointing that was specially prepared with five specific ingredients to anoint the Temple and the High Priests. Moses described God's command to Israel:

"And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil. And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony" (Exodus 30:25,26).

One of the five ingredients needed to make the oil was afars'mon. However, the oil and its ingredients were lost, seemingly forever, when the Romans destroyed the Temple in A.D. 70 and burned the only two groves where afars'mon trees grew. Without this special ingredient, they could never obey God's command to anoint the rebuilt Temple.

In addition, the prophet Daniel foretold that, when the Messiah returns, He will be anointed with this oil of anointing.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon they holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy" (Daniel 9:24).

How could these prophecies be fulfilled when some of the key ingredients were lost forever. Incredibly, several years ago, archeologists in Israel found a clay flask buried near the Dead Sea caves filled with the ancient oil of anointing. Scientists confirmed that the oil is two thousand years old and is composed of the precise ingredients described in Exodus 30:25,26.

Vessels for the Future Temple Worship

Ezekiel foretold that the sacred vessels and linen robes will be prepared for use in the Temple in the Millennium.

"They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge. And it shall come to pass, that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall come upon them, while they minister in the gates of the inner court and within" (Ezekiel 44:16,17).

It is significant that the Temple Institute in the Old City of Jerusalem has prepared over seventy-five of the objects, vessels, and linen priestly garments required for future Temple services. The yeshivas, or Jewish Bible colleges in Jerusalem have trained over five hundred young men from the tribe of Levi to correctly fulfill their future duties of Temple worship and sacrifice. The prophecies describe the resumption of the sacrifice of the Ashes of the Red Heifer to produce the waters of purification (Numbers 19) needed to cleanse the defiled Temple objects, the priests, and the stones on the Temple Mount. The prophet Ezekiel confirmed that the waters of purification will be used to cleanse the future Temple and the Jewish people.

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you" (Ezekiel 36:25).

The Revival of the Roman Empire

The Bible foretold the revival of the Roman Empire in the final generation when the Messiah will return to establish His eternal kingdom:

"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:40-44).

Other prophecies in Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 and 17 confirm the revival of the Roman Empire in the last days in the unique form of a ten-nation superstate. Following the devastation of two world wars the leadership of Europe came together after World War II to plan the creation of a confederate form of superstate bringing the major nations of Europe together for the first time since the days of Rome. In 1957, six countries signed the Treaty of Rome laying the foundation for the future United States of Europe. Henri Spaak, the former secretary-general of NATO admitted in a BBC documentary on the European Union that "we felt like Romans on that day....We were consciously re-creating the Roman Empire once more." Since then, the Maastricht Treaty consolidated the fifteen nations of the European Union into the world's first super-state. It is now an economic, political, and potentially, a military colossus that will dominate world events in the near future.

Rebuilding of Babylon

One of the most unusual of the Bible's prophecies reveals that the city of Babylon will be rebuilt and later destroyed by God at Armageddon by

supernatural fire from heaven like Sodom and Gomorrah. The prophet Isaiah foretold this destruction as follows:

"Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.....And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah" (Isaiah 13:6,19).

In this remarkable prediction the prophet declared that Babylon will not only exist again but it will be destroyed on the Great Day of the Lord. As unlikely as it seems, the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein has spent over one billion dollars rebuilding the ancient city of Babylon and intends that it will become the centre of their future renewed Babylonian Empire. Interestingly, the whole city of Babylon was built over an underground lake of asphalt and oil. God has already provided the fuel for its final destruction. In another prophecy, God foretold that the wicked city will burn forever.

"For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it forever and ever" (Isaiah 34:8-10).

Several years ago during the Gulf War we had a foretaste of this burning of Babylon when Saddam Hussein set hundreds of Kuwaiti oil wells on fire and covered the desert with smoke and fire.

One World Government

Over two thousand years ago the prophets Daniel and John described that there would be a global, world government led by the coming dictator, the Antichrist in the last days (Daniel 7:14).

"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him" (Revelation 13:7,8).

There has never been a world government during thousands of years of human history. However, as I outlined in my last book, *Final Warning*, the elite are moving behind the scenes to produce a world government as quickly as possible. The rising power of the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and

World Court are moving us quickly beyond the days of national sovereignty and individual nations.

Deadly Pestilence

The Bible describes terrible plagues and horrible sores occurring throughout the world's population in the Great Tribulation. The plagues that will destroy hundreds of millions in the last days may include the effects of biological and chemical weapons. Zechariah also described the terrible plagues at the Battle of Armageddon:

"And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongues shall consume away in their mouth" (Zechariah 14:12).

"So I looked, and behold an ashy pale horse,.....and its rider's name was Death, and Hades.....followed him closely; and they were given authority and power over a fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword and with famine and with plague (pestilence, disease) and with wild beasts of the earth" (Revelation 6:8 [amplified version]).

The prophecy of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse warned that a fourth of humanity will be killed by plague and pestilence symbolized by the fourth horseman during the Tribulation. How could this prophecy be fulfilled literally? Tragically, the AIDS and EBOLA epidemic throughout Africa, South America, and Asia is demonstrating how this prophecy may be fulfilled in our generation. The AIDS and EBOLA (recently in 2014) plagues are now poised to destroy a large portion of mankind in the worst epidemic in history. Thus far it appears that no one has survived AIDS for more than twelve years. Jesus warned His disciples about plagues in the last days, "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilence, and earthquakes, in diverse places" (Matthew 24:7).

In North America and Europe the AIDS virus is still primarily infecting people within the homosexual community and those who share illegal drugs through needles. However, in the Third World huge numbers of heterosexuals in Africa, South America, and Asia are now infected with AIDS. Scientists have determined that unprotected promiscuous sexual activity between males and females facilitates the rapid transmission of the AIDS virus throughout the sexually active population in the Third World. The combination of high levels of

promiscuity, an absence of sanitation, minimal AIDS education, and a lack of antibiotics or protection has produced an epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. The only real solution to the AIDS crisis is to return to God's laws regarding a monogamous marriage relationship between a faithful husband and wife. This is the only true "safe sex" that exists in a world of promiscuous behaviour and sexually transmitted disease. In the fall of 1991, the Central Intelligence Agency produced a report on the AIDS epidemic in Africa that was staggering in its conclusions. The evidence pointed to the greatest epidemic and loss of life in human history. The CIA report concluded that up to 75 percent of the population of Africa living in the area south of the Sahara Desert may become infected with AIDS over the next twelve years. This will mean the death by AIDS of over three hundred million people in Africa alone. We are now witnessing the greatest tragedy in history in the death of a whole continent. The mind can scarcely imagine death on this massive scale. The South African Medical Journal in July 1991, reported that a staggering 47 percent of black male and female blood donors tested positive for AIDS during 1989. The prognosis for Asia and parts of South America is tragically similar. One study showed that almost every soldier in the armies of several East African nations that could be tested were found to have been infected by the AIDS virus.

In the words of the Bible, EBOLA too is a plague, an epidemic, a pestilence. The Greek word used in Luke 21:11 NASB and translated "plague" is the same word used in Matthew 24:7 NASB and there translated "famine." It is the Greek word "loimos," meaning "pestilence, plague, (disease) epidemic." (See Friberg Greek Lexicon.). Luke is very likely prophesying of precisely what we are beginning to experience in the modern-day Ebola virus. Yes, there have been many prior "pestilences" since the time of Christ. What makes Ebola fit Christ's prophecy? Lets look at one more passage.

Worldwide Famine

The apostle John described his vision of the horrible famine in the last days.

"And I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand" (Revelation 6:5).

The scales represent famine, and the prophet explains that a day's wages at this time will only buy enough wheat or barley to feed the workman, not his family. The United Nations claims that over thirty million in Africa are now at risk of dying from the most devastating famine in this century. Despite the great advances in food production and food storage techniques more people are starving today than at any other time in history. The UN estimates that one

billion people are in danger of starvation while another billion people lack proper nutrition. North American food reserves (grain and corn) are at the lowest level in sixty years. Wheat reserves worldwide are at the lowest level in this century as our government sends its surplus food to Russia, Bosnia, and Africa. In light of the massive changes in the world weather patterns we may witness devastating famine in the future in countries that felt themselves immune to hunger.

The Rise in Major "Killer" Earthquakes

Jesus prophesied that the last generation of this age would witness the greatest earthquakes in history. Other prophets, including Ezekiel, Zechariah, Haggai, and John predicted awesome earthquakes that would precede Christ's return. Jesus said these earthquakes will occur in "*diverse places*" (strange places). Massive earthquakes are now occurring worldwide in "*diverse places*." Enormous forces are accumulating far beneath the massive tectonic plates supporting the continents. Scientists warn that the major earthquakes felt recently in California, Japan, and other parts of the Pacific Rim are only a foretaste of the coming "Big One," the most massive earthquake in human history. Major "killer" quakes (7.2 or greater on the Richter Scale) occurred only once per decade throughout history until our century. However, since A.D. 1900, the growth in major earthquakes has been relentless. From 1900 to 1949 it averaged three major earthquakes per decade. From 1949 the increase became awesome with 9 killer quakes in the 1950s; 13 in the 1960s; 56 in the 1970s and an amazing 74 major quakes in the 1980s. Finally, in the 1990s, at the present rate, we will experience 125 major killer quakes in this decade (Source: U.S. Geological Survey Earthquake Report, Boulder, Colorado). The prophets warned that the planet will be shaken in the last days as never before. The judgment of God will finally unleash the greatest earthquake in history as part of a series of enormous earthquakes.

"There were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth" (Revelation 16:18).

Preparations for the Mark of the Beast

The Book of Revelation describes the end of cash and the creation of a cashless society in the last days where the possession of a certain number, "666," will be essential to enable you to "*buy or sell*." This was an astonishing prophecy when John proclaimed it in the first century:

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six" (Revelation 13:16-18).

However, we are already 95 percent cashless in America today. Studies reveal that less than 5 percent of the total money in our society exists as paper currency or coins. Revelation describes a time when the number 666 will be placed beneath the skin of the right hand or forehead. Recently, scientists developed a miniature computer chip the size of a dime. This tiny chip will hold as much information as contained in thirty complete sets of the Encyclopedia Britannica. This chip could also be configured in a shape the size of two grains of rice that could be injected beneath the skin. Your complete financial life records could be held by such a chip which could be read from a distance by electronic scanners. Business Week magazine reported on June 3, 1996, p.123, that MasterCard International is testing a "smart card" computer chip that includes information about your fingerprint and identity that can be embedded in a credit/debit card. Card scanners in stores and banks will scan your fingerprint and compare it to the information on the card to verify your identity. How could the apostle John have known that the future would hold such incredible technology unless God inspired him to write the words recorded in Revelation 13:16-18.

Worldwide Television Communication

Another incredible prophecy relating to our era is found in the Book of Revelation that describes worldwide television communications. The prophet John prophesied that in the future tribulation the Antichrist will kill two of God's witnesses who will stop the rain for three-and-a-half years. The prophet declared that the people living around the world will see their deaths and observe their bodies lying unburied for three-and-a-half days in Jerusalem. The whole world will hold a party, exchanging gifts in their relief that their tormentors are dead. Then these people will watch astonished as God resurrects His two witnesses to heaven (Revelation 11:9-10). How could the news that these men were killed travel instantaneously around the world in only three-and-a-half days in any other generation than today? Only seventy years ago it would have taken a week for the news to travel from Israel to Japan or New York. However, today CNN instantly transmits pictures and sound about any important event worldwide. Over a billion people around the world can simultaneously watch the Olympic events every four years. For the first time in history, this prophecy about the

whole world watching an event in Jerusalem can be literally fulfilled in this last decade.

The Islamic State and Bible Prophecy

Bible prophecy the number of the beast 666 Islamic State, Bible prophecy mark number of the beast 666 is the seal of Muhammad, Jihad flag of Islamic State Isis Isil. Revelation 13:12-14:

12: And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13: And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

14: And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

The Islamic State and Bible prophecy, must be our greatest concern at this time. The Islamic State, also known as Isis or Isil, has become a powerful threat in Iraq and Syria. It has declared itself a nation, chosen a radical leader.

The Islamic State is among us in 2014, and in the land promised to Abraham, and is a sign of Christ's soon return to earth. Duncan Heaster's book *The Islamic State in Bible Prophecy* [published by Carelinks Publishing, ISBN 978-1-906951-58-0] combines detailed Bible study with piercing personal and devotional challenge, ever seeking to bring out the crucial need to live in daily preparedness for the second coming of Christ. An Islamic State in the territory of the land promised to Abraham is definitely required by Bible prophecy-whether or not this refers to the entity currently known as The Islamic State, or ISIS, remains to be seen. But there are strong similarities.

Bible Prophecy concerns Israel and the situation within the territory of the land promised to Abraham. This extends from the Nile to the Euphrates. And it is in exactly this area that we see major political, social and religious changes which appear to be accurately fulfilling Bible predictions about the state of the Middle East immediately prior to Christ's return.

The Biblical enemies of Israel were Assyria and Babylon, and yet the Biblical prophecies of the last days speak of latter day desolators of Israel in the same language. We are therefore looking for a reforming of Assyria, Babylon and the

historical enemies of Israel. This is happening before our eyes in the Islamic State [IS], formerly known as ISIS. The Bible requires that a major entity briefly dominates the land promised to Abraham in the last days. This entity is known as "the beast", worships the false prophet, places their mark on those living in the land, persecutes Israel and God's people, takes and dries up the Euphrates river, and violently forces those in the land to accept Islam. These requirements, along with many other fascinating details, are all being fulfilled before our eyes... And the next step is the visible, literal return of the Lord Jesus Christ to establish God's Kingdom on earth. And the good news is that faith and baptism into the Lord Jesus Christ, we can have a part in that eternal Kingdom.

Gospel of the Kingdom shall be Preached in all the World

One of the most wonderful of the prophecies concerns the prediction of Jesus Christ that:

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14).

The Bible has now been translated in more than 3,850 languages in every nation, tribe and dialect on this planet. Electronic communication transmits the message of hope in Jesus Christ through the air waves worldwide. According to researchers on evangelism, over eighty-five thousand people accept Jesus as their personal Savior every day. We have never witnessed such an explosion of the Gospel from the first days following the Feast of Pentecost in Jerusalem until today. There were only one million Christians in China in 1949 after a century of faithful missionary work. However, the Church in China has grown astronomically despite tremendous persecution and the killing of untold millions of believers in concentration camps. Today, the lowest estimates calculate that there are more than one hundred million true followers of Christ in communist China.

Knowledge and Travel shall Increase in the Last Days

Twenty-five centuries ago the Book of Daniel predicted that there would be an explosion of knowledge and a huge increase in travel in the last days. Daniel wrote these words:

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (Daniel 12:4).

Throughout thousands of years of history the level of knowledge only increased incrementally. In some generations the level of general knowledge actually decreased. Yet, in the last century and a half, there has been an explosion of knowledge beyond anything ever experienced in human history. There are more scientists alive today than have lived in all of the rest of history. Recently it was calculated that the total level of human knowledge is growing so quickly that it literally doubles every twenty-four months. This is staggering in light of Daniel's inspired prediction from the ancient past. In addition, Daniel stated that a characteristic of the last days would be an awesome increase in mobility as "*many shall run to and fro.*" The speed of transportation has also exploded in the last century. Throughout history most people have never traveled faster than a galloping horse. Today men travel at over eighteen thousand miles an hour in the U.S. space shuttle Discovery. In addition, while most people in past centuries never traveled more than twenty miles from the place they were born, millions of people now travel the globe as part of their normal course of daily business or annual vacation.

Preparations for the Battle of Armageddon

Numerous prophecies deal with the climactic battle at the end of this age that will bring about the defeat of the Antichrist's armies and the ultimate victory of Jesus Christ to establish His kingdom on earth for a thousand years. The prophet John named the place of the final battle in this war between the Antichrist and the armies of the Kings of the East.

"And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (Revelation 16:16).

John also stated that the army of the eastern nations from the "*kings of the east*" would consist of an astonishing two hundred million soldiers. This statement was almost impossible in light of the fact that the population of the entire Roman Empire in the days of John was only two hundred million people.

"And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them" (Revelation 9:15-16).

However, the population of the nations of Asia are growing so quickly that they could field an army in the next few years containing almost two hundred million soldiers. As a result of the cruel and evil One Child Policy, Chinese couples routinely abort any unborn baby that tests indicate will be female. They keep

aborting fetuses until the tests reveal the woman has a male fetus. Then they allow the male child to be born. Numerous reports by human rights organizations reveal that China, India, and North Korea are involved in the selective abortion of female unborn infants. In addition, many in these nations kill young girls who are not wanted by their parents. As a result, the Toronto Star newspaper reported in 1995 that Chinese officials admitted that they have a staggering imbalance between boys and girls. This sexual imbalance will result in an excess of over seventy million young men in China by the year 2000 with no women for them to produce up to two hundred million excess young men of military age in the next decade. This situation could fulfill the prophecy of John about the two-hundred-million-man army from the East that will fight in the Battle of Armageddon.

A Military Highway across Asia and the Drying Up of the Euphrates River

Another prophecy in Revelation declares that the Euphrates River will be dried up to allow this enormous army of two hundred million soldiers to cross from Asia to invade Israel:

"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared" (Revelation 16:12).

Throughout history the Euphrates River has been an impenetrable military barrier between East and West. However, the government of Turkey recently constructed the huge Ataturk Dam that can now dam up the waters of the Euphrates for the first time in history. The prophet John foretold a future military highway across Asia that would allow this astonishing army to march toward the final battle in Israel. John describes the building of this highway in these words:

"The way of the kings of the east might be prepared" (Revelation 16:12).

The Chinese government has spent enormous sums and expended the lives of hundreds of thousands of construction workers building a military super-highway across Asia heading directly toward Israel. This highway has no economic purpose and no foreigners are allowed anywhere near this road. The highway has been completed through the south of China, Tibet, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. This curious prophecy about "*the way of the kings of the east*" is being fulfilled in the 1990s setting the stage for the final battle of this age.

The Staggering Odds against These Prophecies Being Fulfilled in Our Lifetime

In this chapter we have examined a number of significant prophecies fulfilled in our lifetime that point to the Lord's return in this generation. Almost two thousand years have passed from the time of Christ until our generation. At its simplest level we can ask: What are the odds that even ten of these specific prophecies would be fulfilled by chance during our lifetime? If these prophecies could not have occurred by random chance, then their fulfillment is proof that God inspired the writers of the Bible to correctly predict these future events! In the Bible there are several types of generations. One generation is defined as the length of life of the average person - seventy or eighty years. However, a generation of governing is usually defined as forty years, as indicated in the forty-year reigns of Gideon, King David, King Solomon, et cetera. During the last two thousand years since the days of Christ, there were fifty such forty-year generations. Therefore, the odds are one chance in fifty that any one of these specific prophecies happened by chance in our generation rather than some other generation. Examine the prediction about the rebirth of Israel, as prophesied by Matthew 24:32, as an example. There was only one chance in fifty that Israel would become a nation in our lifetime, rather than in some other generation such as A.D. 350, or A.D. 1600.

According to the laws of combined probability the chance that two or more events will occur in a given time period is equal to the chance that one event will occur multiplied by the chance that the second event would occur. If the odds are fifty to one against Israel being reborn in our lifetime by chance and the odds are also fifty to one against the revival of the Roman Empire in our generation; then the combined probability is fifty times fifty which equals one chance in twenty-five hundred. To calculate the probability of these prophecies occurring by chance:

What are the Odds That These Prophecies Were Fulfilled by Chance?

There are 40 years to a generation

There are 50 generations from Christ till today.

Therefore:

The odds are 1 in 50 of any of these prophecies occurring in our lifetime.

The odds are:

1 event = 1x50

2 events = 50x50

1 in 50

1 in 2,500

3 events = 50x50(3 times)	1 in 125,000
4 events = 50x50(4 times)	1 in 6.25 million
5 events = 50x50(5 times)	1 in 312.5 million
6 events = 50x50(6 times)	1 in 15.6 billion
7 events = 50x50(7 times)	1 in 780 billion
8 events = 50x50(8 times)	1 in 39 trillion
9 events = 50x50(9 times)	1 in 1,950 trillion
10 events = 50x50(10 times)	1 in 97,500 trillion (or 97.5 quadrillion)

Obviously, the odds against even ten prophecies occurring by random chance alone in one generation are simply staggering. The above calculation suggests that there is only one chance in 97,500 Trillion (or 97.5 Quadrillion) that these particular predictions from the Bible could be fulfilled by chance in our lifetime. Another way of looking at this is that the chance that the prophets of the Bible correctly guessed these prophecies is also one chance in 97,500 Trillion. If we calculated the odds against all twenty of these prophecies occurring by chance, the numbers would be beyond our ability to comprehend. In other words, it is simply impossible that men alone could have written the Bible without the supernatural assistance and inspiration of God.

This analysis demonstrates the truly incredible odds against even ten specific prophecies being fulfilled by chance in our generation. The odds against only ten prophecies occurring by random chance was $50 \times 50 \times 50 \times 50 \times 50 \times 50 \times 50 \times 50 \times 50 \times 50 =$ one chance in 97,500 Trillion! This number is so large that it is hard to conceive of it. However, to illustrate these incredible odds; consider this. The odds of 97,500 Trillion to one are equal to the estimated numbers of grains of sand that would fill our entire planet. Imagine that we were able to take a single grain of sand out of this staggering number of grains of sand and paint it blue. Then we blindfold you and let your search the planet for this buried grain of sand as long as you wish. Remember the entire globe consists of grains of sand and you would need to consider the possibility that the blue painted grain of sand was buried ten miles or, possibly, a thousand miles deep beneath the planet's surface. When you think you have found the right place, stop and pick up a random grain of sand. If you were lucky enough to pick up the only grain of sand painted blue by pure chance, you would have equaled the odds of one chance in 97,500 Trillion against even these ten prophecies being fulfilled by chance in our generation. Frankly, I don't think you would find that grain of sand. Likewise, it is simply impossible that these twenty prophecies were fulfilled by random chance.

The Scriptures teach that the final generation of this age will witness the fulfillment of a staggering number of prophecies pointing to the soon return of the promised Messiah. The evidence presented in this chapter also provides astonishing evidence that proves that only God could have inspired the writers of the Scriptures to accurately predict the startling number of predictions already fulfilled in our lifetime. The words of Jesus speak especially to our generation,

"Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near" (Luke 21:28).

Brief history of Kings and Prophets for memory

In Hebrew history when the people of Israel cried for a king, the Lord sent Samuel to anoint Saul as the first king over Israel. After Saul died David became king and he was the greatest king over Israel, he made Israel a strong nation following the Lord. After David died, his son Solomon became king and he made Israel wealthy and famous among all the nations of the world. Solomon's one mistake was that he married foreign wives. These women brought their foreign gods and idols into Israel, and it was not long before idolatry spread throughout Israel. When Solomon died the kingdom was split in two, the Northern Kingdom consisted of ten of the tribes and was called Israel, and the Southern Kingdom consisted of two of the tribes and was called Judah.

From this point onward almost every king was an idol worshipper. In fact every king in the North was evil, but in the Southern Kingdom of Judah some of the kings followed the Lord, and when they brought the people back to God the nation prospered. But when they disobeyed the Lord great problems would arise.

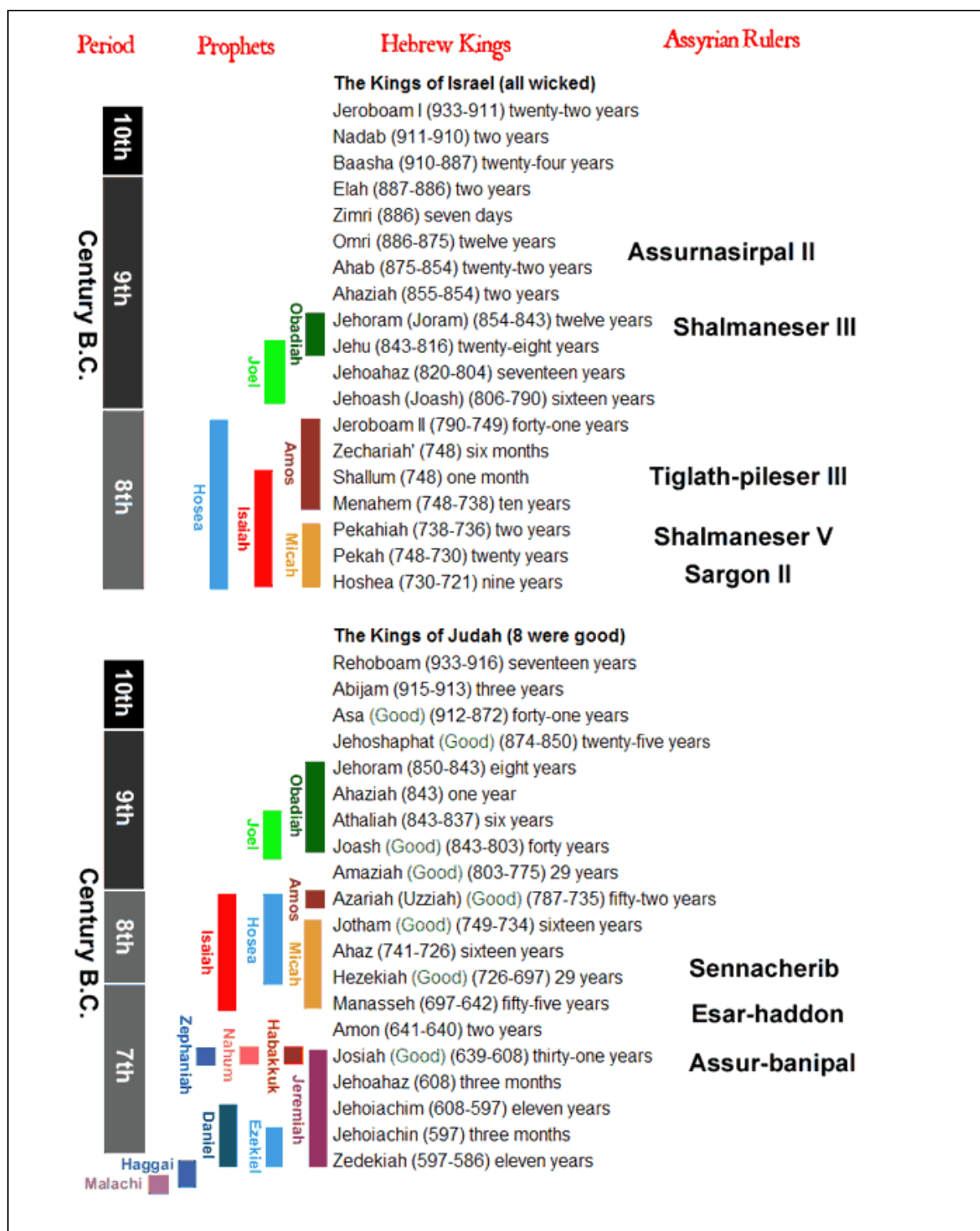
It was during this time that God raised up certain "prophets" who were His mouthpieces. They would speak out against their sin and idolatry and would continually warn of God's judgment. Some of the prophets spoke out in the North and some in the South, but God was faithfully warning them of certain catastrophe if they would not turn to him.

Finally in 722 BC the Assyrians came down and conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel and took the ten tribes away never to be seen again. The prophets had continually warned them but the judgment finally came.

The Southern Kingdom had continued to follow the Lord, but they finally turned away from God and became totally corrupt. In 586 BC the Babylonians came and destroyed Jerusalem and carried the Jews away to Babylon. God continued

to send prophets to encourage the Hebrews that their captivity would only last 70 years.

The prophets also gave a message of hope that one day God would send His Messiah, who would not only save the Hebrews but the whole world. Their message was that their real bondage and captivity was to spiritual powers that cannot be seen, and God Himself would come as a man and die, so that death would "Passover" anyone who believes, and break their spiritual captivity.



The Importance of Studying Biblical Prophecy of the Second Coming

The church of Thessalonica was the only church in the New Testament times in which the apostle Paul acknowledged their great understanding of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The knowledge that the church of Thessalonica had can not be compared even to the most faithful churches in our days. Looking at the background of these Thessalonians that before the coming of Paul to this city, there was none even one Christian in the city. However, Paul, having spent time to teach and preach the word of God, the church had grown rapidly in their understanding of the mystery of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. At the Missionary Journey of Paul

The beginning of the church of Thessalonica was at the second missionary journey of Paul together with Silas and Timothy. Before they entered the city of Thessalonica, Paul and his companions Timothy and Silas were badly treated at the first arrival in Europe in the city of Philippi. They were unjustly beaten, put to the prison because of the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. However by the providence of God they managed to escape from this city and continued their ways westward across and reached the country of Macedonia. Act 17:1-4 recorded that their arrival was truly by the leading and direction of the Lord. It was in this time that Paul held one of the greatest Bible Conferences in all the history. "Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbaths days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few."

Paul and his little band missionary arrived in the new mission field where apparently there was not even Christian there before they came. There was no any means to tell others about the gospel such TV, Radio, etc. There was not financial guarantee at all, in fact only three to four weeks available to do the necessary things and preach the gospel but it brought the greatest impact to the people. The powerful testimony for Christ was established in that city. Not only the church was established but also their understanding of the Word of God and faith had grown in their hearts of the program of God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The Sending of the Letter to the Church of Thessalonica

The main key Luke has recorded in Acts is the teaching concerning the dead and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as predicted in the Old Testament. After the departure of Paul and the group from the city of Thessalonica, then Paul soon wrote a little letter to them concerning the teaching of the word of God, concerning the meaning of the dead and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Paul wrote to them about the heart of the gospel, he was able to tell them about the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ that amazed us that how much they knew about the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

First Thessalonians is the first letter Paul wrote to the brand new church of Thessalonica. This was written for even after Paul pleaded from that city, he still did not know what had happened to those new Christians, whether they were so discouraged and scattered, or whether the church was broken up and destroyed. The heart of Paul was deeply burnt, and then he wrote a letter to them as he said in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2 “But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. (Why) For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.”

When we read that verse, we, Christians who live in this generation are amazed about the knowledge that the Thessalonians have. Their knowledge of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ was so perfect, mature, complete and even the great apostle said that he did not need to tell them about all these. The times and the seasons are prophetic time and season just like Jesus told to his disciples in Acts 1:7 that the time and the season are in the father’s hand and you do not have to know when will be the time. This is to say that the new Christians in the church of Thessalonica knew perfectly what will happen and what the order of the events when Christ returns. The church of Thessalonica was just a new-born church in which Paul served for few weeks but their understanding of the Word of God was really great. This is the question to all believers in this generation, how long have we known the Lord Jesus Christ and how long have we had the Bible in our own language to read, study and understand? We are ashamed to ourselves because of the knowledge that we have so little though we have the Bible in our own hand.

3. The Maturity of the Christians in the Church of Thessalonica

The church in Thessalonica perhaps was just two months old and yet they have known so much about the significant of the dead and resurrection the Messiah predicted in the Old Testament. They also knew about the things that will happen at the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact in 1 and 2

Thessalonians Paul wrote to this little church that every single chapter of this book is referring to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

For example, let us see some of the passages in first Thessalonians concerning the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the end of 1 Thessalonians 1 in verse 10 “To wait for his Son from heaven....even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come.” In 1 Thessalonians 2:19 says “For what is our hope, or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? In 1 Thessalonians 3:13 “To the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.” The Lord Jesus Christ will be coming therefore we must be prepared in our heart for that great event. This was further described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of th archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” This is the great promises of the rapture of the church that will take place. In 1 Thessalonians 5 is full of prophecy of the events of the coming of the Lord and the climax is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” That every part and every aspect of our being might be so sanctified and cleansed from the habits of sins for the joyful union with the Lord in that day.

In 2 Thessalonians 1 we can see also some of the things and promises that will happen at the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and His angels. Everything has been described in the book including the coming of the Antichrist as mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2 that the Antichrist will claim that he is God. Thus Paul told them in 2 Thessalonians 2:5 “Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?” Paul has told them about the great apostasy and what the Antichrist will do in the temple because all these are the prophetic programs of God. Having seen all this truth mastered by the church of Thessalonians, we marvel for the zeal of learning that these believers have concerning the Word of God. It is absolutely that there is no even one church in our days that have such zeal in the Word of God. In fact we wonder when are the church and Bible classes started, how much the Bible prophetic of the word of God is given? Some may say that the study of the prophetic books is difficult to understand and complicated. But one thing that we need to know is that all the prophetic truth in the Bible is intended by God for us to know and learn.

The Old Testament in General on the Second Coming of Christ

While Jesus Christ was with His disciples, His teachings were not lacking concerning His Second Coming to prepare them for that great day. When Jesus ascended before His disciples, two angels spoke to the disciples in the Mount of Olives saying “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). He will be coming to the earth at the same top namely at the Mount of Olives and He will come visibly, physically in glory. Thus we must be ready.

The prophecy of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus was not mentioned by Jesus Himself or His apostle but the Holy Spirit has been speaking about His Second Coming hundreds years before His first coming. This is to say that the Old Testament Scriptures does not only give the prophecy of His first Coming such Isaiah 7:14, Micah 5 and Zechariah 9 but also hundreds of passages devoted for His Second Coming. The passages right from the book of Genesis to Revelation contain many prophecies of His return. The following passages are eight prophetic passages in the Old Testament about the Second Coming as at His first coming.

1. Genesis 3:15

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

2. Numbers 14:17-19

“I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.”

3. Deuteronomy 30:1-20

“And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, And

shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers: If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

4. 1 Samuel 2:30-35

“Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever. And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.”

5. Psalms 2:7-9

“I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”

6. Psalms 72:8-11

“He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.”

7. Psalms 110:1-4

“The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”

8. Isaiah 2:1-4

“The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

Apart from these eight prophetic passages there are still many prophetic passages given in the Old Testament about the Second Coming and what He will do for this world through Israel at the coming of His beloved Son. The problem today is that there are many people who are ignorant for His Coming, though it is not because of the lacking of Bible references. God the Father has told about the coming of His Son, and the Lord Jesus Christ told the disciples and the people about the things related to His Second Coming, and yet we are slow in heart to believe what the Lord said. Thus we may conclude that we must study the word of God faithfully and diligently because God loves the diligent student of His Word.

Jesus' Teaching on the Second Coming

1. According to the gospel of Luke

a. Luke 9:26-31

What was Jesus saying about His Second Coming in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John? The answers to this question we will see just from one book namely the gospel of Luke. The very word of Jesus concerning His coming we find in Luke 9:26-27 when he says, “For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's and of the Holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.” What does it mean when Jesus says He will come with the glory of the Father and of the Holy angels? And what does it mean also when the Lord Jesus

says that “there be some standing here, which shall not of death, till they see the kingdom of God?” The answers are found in the following verses. “And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elijah: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem” (Luke 9:28-31). This was regarding His crucifixion, which He will accomplish in Jerusalem. Three of the disciples saw the transfiguration of Christ which the preview of His Second Coming. This is the advance indication to the three disciples what Christ looks like to see him in the glory. This was the preview because the two dead men came and the voice of the father from heaven saying, “this is my beloved son in which I am pleased.”

b. Luke 12:36-40

Another passage that recorded by Luke the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning His Second Coming to this earth is found in Luke 12:36. It says, “And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.” In this verse, Jesus describes Himself as the bridegroom who is going to bring His bride. And Jesus continued to say, “Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, have suffered his house to be broken through” (Luke 12:37-39). This is to say that no one knows when the coming of the Lord Jesus except God the Father. We need to be ready at all times as we continue to read in Luke 12:40 “Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.” We should not think that He will not come and then we do our own things and not of the Lord. In this short passage we see the constant reminder for every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ that we need to prepare ourselves for the coming of the Lord and be ready at any time.

c. Luke 13:24-30

Luke 13:24-27 “Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto

you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.” Hearing this word from the Lord Jesus Christ we are reminded that it is not the wonderful and dramatic works that the Lord expect from all of us but the faithfulness of us to what He has commanded us to do. We think of those who are just professing Christians, they may claim to the Lord for what they have been doing as so-called Christians but at the end the Lord does not count their works. The judgement will be given to those people.

Furthermore the Lord Jesus continued to say what the things will happen in His Second Coming as we see in Luke 13:29-30. He says, “And they shall come from the east, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.” There will be a great joy for those who know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. All believers in the world will be gathered together in the kingdom of God. The question we ask, what about those who are just merely pretenders as Christians? The answer is given in Luke 13:28 that “There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.” How horrible it is for those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! Knowing this great judgement from the Lord the unbelievers may say that they do not want to enter such situation but when they are urged to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is absolutely rejected. This is the situation of many people that they do not want to go to hell but their attitude and behaviour never bother about the reality of hell. If in this life a man does not come to know the Lord Jesus Christ, then there is no opportunity anymore after his death as the writer of Hebrews said “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement” (Hebrews 9:27).

d. Luke 17:20-24

When Jesus Christ was with the Pharisees, they asked a question of when the kingdom of God is coming. As we read in Lukas 17:20-21 we see the clear answer from the Lord Jesus Christ to those unbelieving Jews. Luke 17:20-21 saying, “And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” In other word, Jesus was saying “I am the King and I am in the midst of you and I am here.” However the Lord Jesus said to His disciples not to the Pharisees concerning the coming of the Lord. We read in Luke 17:22-24 “And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye

shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them. (Why?) For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.” These are the things that will happen just before the Second Coming of the Lord because of the apostasy of the church and the growing numbers of the apostates, the great deception will occur. If there are people who claim as the King we should know one thing that Christ is the King. We do not have to wonder whether He is coming or not, because everybody will see Him. There is nothing secret but it will be visible.

e. Luke 18:8

Luke 18:8 “I tell you that he will avenge them speedily, Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” It implies that the situation at the Second Coming of Christ in the world will be so terrible. The Antichrist will absolutely control the world with his power because it is the final program of the Antichrist. However the Lord will show His mercy to His people and Israel will be saved despite of the horrible things happen in this world.

f. Luke 19:12

In Luke 19:12 Jesus gives the parables saying, “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.” The context of this passage tells that this nobleman gave certain responsibility to each of his servants while he was not around that when he came back he would find his servants doing what he had commanded. However this parable tells that some have done much, some have done little but one man has done nothing because he is a disobedient servant. Whatever the Lord gives to us, we must do it wholeheartedly to please our God. We need to do what He has commanded us in His Holy Scripture.

g. Luke 21:7

In Luke 21:7, we notice that the more Jesus spoke about His Second Coming, the more anxious the disciples were. In this occasion the disciples were asking Jesus concerning His Second Coming. As we read, “And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? And what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?” To answer this question, the Lord Jesus in the whole chapter of Luke 21 explained all the details that will happen in the coming of the Lord.

h. Luke 22:16-18

Luke 22:16 “For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.” When Jesus said this word to His disciples in the upper room, He was telling them the nearest of His crucifixion and death. In 1 Corinthians 11 reminded the Christians in the church of Corinth concerning what the Lord Jesus said in Luke 22:16. Paul wrote this revelation of God by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit saying, “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Corinthians 11:26). This is the Holy Communion that every church of the Lord Jesus Christ must do because in so doing, the believers in the Lord will remember what Jesus has done for us and anticipate for His coming when we will see Him face to face. There is no greater comfort then knowing the coming of the Lord Jesus. He right now is preparing a mansion for us and He will take us there. This is the tremendous assurance for those who believe in Him.

The Apostles’ Teaching on the Second Coming

1. According to the apostle Paul

In 2 Thessalonians 3:5 we read “And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.” What Paul wrote here is the example of the church of Thessalonica as they journey this earth and waiting for the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. For every church today must follow as what Paul said to the church of Thessalonians namely we need the love of God and the patient in waiting for Christ.

Another aspect of the events in the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ we find in 1 Corinthians 15. The passage tells us exactly what kind of resurrection body we will have when the Lord fixes the day. The body that we have right now is made of dust of this earth and the Lord will not allow this kind of body to enter His kingdom. Flesh and Blood can not inherit of the kingdom of God but we shall pattern after the resurrection body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus has the body that is flesh and bone and not flesh and blood. The book of Leviticus clearly said that the life of the body is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11). Thus our body in the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus will be changed in to the glorified body as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 “Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised

incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” Paul did not only teach the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ on these two epistles but rather in all his epistles he did emphasise that the recipients of his letters might continue to be ready for the return of the Lord.

2. According to the apostle James

In James 5:7-8 “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” This is the practical emphasis James gave concerning the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the recipients of his epistle were living as strangers and pilgrims in other lands, James comforted them with this wonderful word of God. On the other hand, James reminded the believers about the judgement of the Lord as he said in James 5:9 “Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.” The Lord Jesus said that God has committed all judgement to the Son of man. Jesus Christ will also judge the world and every one of us must appear before the throne judgement of God.

3. According to the apostle Peter

In 2 Peter 3:3-4 we are also told about the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts. And, where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” Peter knew that there would be people who would be asking in that way because they have doubted concerning the promises of God. For this reason Peter gave the answer in 2 Peter 3:5-6 “For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.” Furthermore Peter describes the details of the fulfilment of God’s promises (2 Peter 3:7-9). Indeed God never forgets His promises but He will come to judge the world. In the past because of the wickedness of the people the Lord has judged the world with Genesis’ flood and He will judge and destroy the world again for the same reason at the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now Peter warned the recipients of his epistles to be ready in any time for the Coming of the Lord because no one will know when He will return. Thus 2 Peter 3:10-12 tells the absolute truth of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus. It says “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the

heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" Every material and substance in this world will be destroyed automatically by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ then followed by the new heaven and new earth that is the prophetic program of God who can not lie. Everything will be fulfilled according to what the Lord said in His word.

4. According to the Apostle Jude

The apostle Jude has a testimony for the coming events connected to the coming of our Lord. We notice the whole book of Jude is talking about the apostasies that will happen in the church as the signs of the nearest return of the Lord Jesus to this earth. As Jude explains what those apostates will do in the church and to the believers, Jude reminds his recipients that they have a God who is able to keep them from falling. As we read in Jude 24 saying "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Thus despite of the wickedness of this world by the power of God we who believe in Him will be preserved and saved for God's glory. The Lord will preserve us till the Lord Jesus Christ returns where we can see Him face to face.

5. According to the apostle John

The apostle John whom Jesus Christ loved was exiled at the land of Patmos until the end of his life. However it was during his exile in this island, sixty years after Jesus had died and returned to heaven, Jesus gave him the panorama of the coming events connected to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle John before the Lord gave him the marvellous revelation of God concerning the coming events in the book of Revelation; Paul has reminded the believers in his first epistle concerning the coming of the Lord. This is to prepare us for the book of Revelation as we read in 1 John 2:28 "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." Furthermore John said in 1 John 3:2-3 "but we know that, when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Thus we need to get ready for His coming. We must not be ashamed when He comes but we must be purified by looking and having anticipation, long for the coming of the Lord.

In the book of Revelation chapter 1, Christ gave us a symbolic presentation of His Second Coming and chapter 2-3 is representing the church of the age. In these two chapters of Revelation we see the warning that the Lord gave to each of the seven churches that they might listen with their spiritual ears because Christ will come. Every church is tested according to their works and faithfulness to His word and not according to what they have achieved in this world.

Beginning from Revelation 4 to 19 we see that God sends forth the horse. The seventieth year week of Daniel namely seven years period between the Rapture of the church and the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with His glorified church and during these seven years, fantastic things will happen upon this earth and the planets in heaven above where the church will be purified at the judgement seat of Christ. It is during this period of time that the people of Israel in this earth will make a covenant with the Antichrist. In the midst of troubles and war in Israel, two witnesses will come down from heaven to Jerusalem prophesying about the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result of their preaching there will be 144,000 Jews shield by God. They will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and as soon as they are saved they will be evangelists in Jerusalem and the whole world. Some people will be saved as a result of their evangelistic preaching but in those days they will be persecuted and martyred. Thus there will be horrible chaos and destruction for the whole world that never be known before. Everything that the Lord has said will be fulfilled.

Having seen what will happen in the seventieth year week of Daniel, in Revelation 20:1-6, we see the great promise of the great millennium. This event will follow immediately after the end of the seven years of the great tribulation. One thousand years of the reign of Christ in this earth will be inaugurated by His Second Coming in which those who trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ will be allowed to enter His kingdom for a thousand years. After the millennial, Satan will be loosed from the bound and even those who reject Christ in their heart will be resurrected, facing the Lord Jesus Christ as a Judge in the great white throne for the final judgement of the world.

Lastly in Revelation 21-22 we see the new heaven and the new earth, the New Jerusalem, the marvellous promise of God about His kingdom. It is marvellous to know that the whole last book of the Bible devoted to the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which Paul never knew because he had already died before the book of Revelation was written. Therefore the Thessalonians knew the times and the seasons perfectly, which they knew nothing about the book of Revelation as we have in the completed Bible. Thus we may conclude with this

question, why did Paul, James, Peter, Jude and John write so much about the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ? The answer is because the Lord Jesus Himself emphasised so much about His Second Coming to this world. In Matthew, Mark, Luke and John we are told so much about the Lord's coming. Therefore just before Jesus went to heaven He gave the terminus command to the apostles as the great commission. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world (Matt 28:19-20). These are the things that Paul, John, Jude and Peter were doing. All the apostles have committed to obey what the Lord Jesus Christ has commanded to them in the great commission. As for us believers in the Lord Jesus Christ the same command is given that we must do as the apostles have done. We need to have the proper emphasis of the Second Coming of Christ otherwise the church has not done and preached the whole counsel of God.

The Future Plan of God for the Church

1. According to Jesus

What is the Church? And what is the future plan of God for the Church? In what programs of God the church will be included? In order to know the answers to these questions it is important to study what the Lord Jesus Christ said about the church while He was in this earth during His public ministry. We read in Matthew 16:18 when Jesus said, "I will build my church." This is to say that the program of God for the church is still in the future when He says this word. It implies that the Lord Jesus Christ sees the different plan of God for Israel and the church. God has a special purpose for Israel and the church as well, but the plan of God to both groups of people is not the same. Israel already exists for many years but the church (local church) does not exist during the ministry of Jesus in His first coming. John the Baptist also indicates about the plan of God for the church in John 3:29-30 that the church is not only in the future but he himself does not have opportunity to belong to it. As he says, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." The friend of the bridegroom is different from the bride because the bride is the church. So the question is when is the beginning of the church? After the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, His disciples based on the great commission that they received, went out to preach the gospel not only in Jerusalem but also in Judea and Samaria which we can see as the beginning of the church.

2. According to the apostle Paul

Paul tells us in Ephesians 3:5-6 that the church is the brand new thing which is never known before. Paul says, "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." What is that hidden in the past but now revealed? It is "That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."

Before the Pentecost, the believers were in two groups namely the Jews and Gentiles. The Gentiles should become the Jews in some extents to be fully involved in the program of God. But Paul said in this passage that now the mystery is the new arrangement in the plan of God. The Gentiles do not need to become Jews in order to be acceptable before the Lord because in the body of Christ there is no Jew and Gentile. This mystery was revealed and begun in the day of Pentecost as the Lord Jesus Christ says that few days after he left to heaven, the Holy Spirit of God would baptise them who trust in Him namely the bride of Christ, the true church of Jesus Christ. The proof of this promise was fulfilled in the day of Pentecost. God is calling people to this new organism, the church to Himself and when it is complete; there will be rapture of the church. Now Jesus is preparing for the time of the rapture that every believer will meet Him face to face in the air. This will be the end of God's program for the church on this earth.

In the study of the plan of God for the church, we are not only to know when the church is begun in God's program, but we need to understand who will belong to this church. The church is not only the small percentage Christians on this earth but every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ from generation to generation. They are the sanctified people in the Lord because in Hebrew 10:10 said that we who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are sanctified by the blood of Christ, once for all. In Philippians 1:6 Paul says, "Being confident of this very thing that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform until the day of Jesus Christ." Every Christian the moment he is born again he is sanctified by God and he is in this earth in the process of sanctification day by day. His sinful nature will be banished away and he is called a saint. However we need to understand clearly that the idea of saint that we are talking about is totally different to what the world offers to man. Many people have said that only those who have done great things to people and to the church are worthy to be called the saints. What they have said is absolutely a contradiction to what the Word of God says. Every born again Christian in the New Testament is worthy to be called a saint. In 1 Corinthians 1:2-3 we read what Paul says to the Christians in

the church of Corinth. “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours. Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.”

a. The Sanctified people is the Saint

What do we have to do to be a saint? What do we have to do to be sanctified by the blood of Jesus Christ? The only answer to these questions is we must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Apart from believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, there is nothing that the Christians need to do to be sanctified. It is all settled the moment we believe in Him. God is taking care of this matter but the process of sanctification is begun at the moment we are saved, up to the time of the rapture. In this process, the Holy Spirit is used by God to sanctify us through the written Word of God. However it is sad to know that many Christians set aside the Scripture and focus on the matter of dreams, visions and speaking in tongues, and ever experiencing and some other things.

In John 17:17 Jesus prayed saying “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” The Word of God is the instrument sanctifying God’s people. As Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:18 “ We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” We need to come to the Word of God to reveal ourselves clearly. Thus in the process of sanctification, the Word of God does two things for us, Christians. Firstly, it shows that we are not in the light of other people but in the light of God. Secondly, it shows us how far we have fallen short from God’s standard of Christian living. Thus the Bible is the cleansing agent to remove the defilement of our sins as Ephesians 5:26 when Paul spoke of the washing of the water by the Word.

The Great Judgment Seat of Christ

1. What is the Judgement Seat of Christ?

Do we need to go to the judgement seat of Christ? The answer is yes and all Christians will be there. One may continue to say that the moment we believe in the Lord we have been cleansed by the blood of Christ from all our sins and judgement forever. So what is the judgement seat of Christ for then? The answer is that judgment seat of Christ is not to determine our salvation but your reward for serving Christ and obeying His known will in our lives. 2 Corinthians 5:10 tell us, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done,

whether it be good or bad.” Take notes what Paul said here when he used the pronoun “we” in the phrase “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” He was talking to the Christians and not to the unbelievers. Everything will all be exposed and unveiled in that time before the Lord. In Romans 14:10 Paul warned the Christians who are in pride and judging others. “But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” Every Christian who ever lived will appear before the Judgement seat of Christ. It will not be a pleasant experience for many Christians but a sad experience because of what they have done in their Christian living on this earth.

Thus Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 that the Christians have the foundation built upon the Lord Jesus Christ. “Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” This passage tells us about the Christians who will be fired and rested their works by the Lord Jesus Christ. All things the Christians have done on this earth will be fired.

What is this fire? In Revelation 1:14 says that Jesus Christ has eyes as a flaming fire. This is to say that the Lord Jesus Christ does not have outside fire as His help to know what He is examining. His own eye can provide fire because “For our God is consuming fire” (Hebrew 12:29). The Bible gives us an example through the life of Lot who lived in the midst of the wicked people and compromised with them. Lot suffered lost because of his disobedience and he lost his family by fire but he himself will be saved.

2. The Method of Judgement of God

How will the Lord judge the Christians? And what method will He use? It is important to know that the way of judgement that God will do will be more different from our method of judgement each other even ourselves. In Luke 8:17 Jesus said, “For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.” Everything in that day will be revealed. Romans 2:16 tell us that “In the day when God shall judge the secrets of man by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.” “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts and then shall every man have praise of God” (1 Corinthians 4:5). “For the word of

God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). Based on these passages we can see the different method of judgement of God and of man. Our judgement upon other people even for ourselves based on our visible things but God’s is based on heart searching.

The Lord will not only judge people according to their secret attitude but He will also judge them according to how much they really know God’s revealed word. In Luke 12:47-48 Jesus Christ says concerning knowing the will of God, “And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.” In this passage we notice that the servants of God who are partly ignorant of the will of God will suffer less than who know God’s will and rejected it. But both these servants are beaten, because ignorance is not the excuse when we have opportunity to discover God’s truth. The Lord is aware of our motives for neglecting His Word but nevertheless those who are in the greater light have the greater responsibility.

3. The granting of the reward

1 Corinthians 3:12-15 “Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” As we read again 1 Corinthians 3:12-15, what then do we think about the gold, silver and precious stone that are mentioned here to guarantee our survival in the judgement seat of Christ? In the first place we need to understand that the things we do for the Lord Jesus Christ must be based on our love for Him. We remember the sadness of the heart of Jesus in the book of Revelation 2 for the church of Ephesus. After the Christians in the church of Ephesus have worked so hard, the Lord Jesus said to them, “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee because thou have left thy first love.” This is to say that the Lord Jesus is more concerned on why we serve Him than how much we serve Him. He is more interested on why we give sacrificially for His works than how much we give to Him. If we do things because of our love for Christ and for His glory we will be rewarded and honoured in that great day. The church of Ephesus in

Revelation 2 was doing many things in the church but it was based on routine and tradition. Thousands of Christians are doing the same things right now in this world. It is just a habit in attending the church each Sunday and giving the offering but nevertheless it is just a routine. This is worthless before the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ said to the church of Ephesus in Revelation 2:5 “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

In addition to what the apostle John has recorded in the book of Revelation, the apostle Paul said in Romans 12:9 “Let love be without dissimulation Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.” It means that we do not play game with truth and error, Satan and God, and darkness and light. We need to have the attitude like the Lord Jesus Christ that He absolutely hated the error, evil, corruption, deception and apostasy. There is no compromise and loving confrontation with evil. John the Baptist was the greatest man that ever lived born of the woman who lived without compromise (Matthew 11:11). Because the strong conviction of John the Baptist in his message without compromise he loved to tell the truth to Pharisees, Saducees and those who lived in those days. Therefore let love be without dissimulation.

The Bible tells us that the only possible way to perpetuate the most precious the church has namely the truth of God in the written word, is to separate from those who distort, damage, pollute, and destroy the Word of God. It means we need to separate ourselves from those who involved in this matter. This is to say we need to excommunicate those who have involved in these matters. What did Paul say to those who lost their discernment concerning truth in the church of Corinth? We read in 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” Having read this passage we say this is unpleasant. The issue here is that just like a doctor talking to one person that part of his body must be removed and need to have surgery. If it is not done, it will destroy his entire life and die. However the most pleasant thing that the doctor can say is to tell that

person that there will be separation of the contaminating, poisoning part of the body or else death will come. Amputation is the loving act in order to save that person.

As the Lord set the church and the church should serve the Lord but the church must destroy the elements which destroy the purity of the church and the truth of the Word of God. The truth of the Word of God is the most neglected by many so-called Christians. Compromising is the main issue in many churches in this world but the truth can not be compromised. The apostle of love said in his epistle concerning those who destroy and contaminate God's truth in 2 John 10-11 "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." Thus if we do not love God enough and doing the things that He entrusted to us according to His command, and if we open deliberately the door of our Bible class, church and home for teaching and influence to the ones who undermine and deny the truth concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, then we will loose our reward. So the basic truth that we study here is we must love the Lord Jesus Christ wholeheartedly and be faithful to what the Lord has given to us.

Presentation of the Bride to the Lord Jesus Christ through the Purging Process

What is the next program of the Lord? It is the presentation of the Bride namely the church to the Lord Jesus Christ through the purging process. The church must be bold denouncing error and separating from the unbelieving world which will destroy the Word. Anything that destroys the Light must be dealt seriously. Our coming judgement seat of Christ is compared to the great contest in the New Testament. As we read the use of race illustrated this point in 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 saying "Knowing ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." God will provide gold metal to every Christian who meet God's standard. This incorruptible reward and crown will continue forever.

In 2 Timothy 2:1-7 Paul tells his son Timothy certain qualifications that he needs to do to please the Lord. "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.” How much more does God need to say? Those who please God will be those who discipline themselves to put His Word and plan first in the line before anything else. We ask the Lord, “How do you want me to serve you, Lord?” The answer is that our love must be the greatest to the Lord Jesus who died for us and put His spirit in us. We need to trust Him faithful and we can not say, “I can not do it.” If we deny Him, He can not be your God. Thus as long as we live in this world we must please Christ.

Do we know what Paul says about reward? We read in Colossians 2:18 “Let no man beguile you of your reward.” It is sad to say that it is happening all the time. The Christians are hearing the different voice and following deliberately the wrong church and they are loosing their reward. However some may say “I do not care about reward.” We must care about it, for Christ had died and paid the infinite price to make possible for us to have reward. Truly we must be willing to take what He wants you to receive otherwise He is not our Lord. Thus Paul reminded us by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that we must be careful and do not let anyone loose it.

When will all these happen? The answer is at the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. We read in Revelation 19:7-9 “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.” When the church is raptured from this earth, the great tribulation will occur to this world and those who do not belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. But to those who love the Lord there will be a blessed day for them where they can see Jesus face to face. In Revelation 20:4, 6 we also see some of the rewards that will be given in the millennial kingdom. “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.....they live and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” Thus we will rule the world together with God for a thousand years and in that millennial kingdom Satan will be bounded. We will be like Jesus, and we will be revealed in the glory and final sanctification and to see Jesus Christ

The biblical and prophetic vocabulary

In the Hebrew Bible, the word for "prophet" is usually *nabi'* (lit. "spokesperson"; used over 300 times!), while the related feminine noun *nebi'ah* ("prophetess") occurs only rarely. Both words are derived from the root verb *naba'* ("to prophesy; to speak on behalf of another"). The root meaning of "prophet" is clearly expressed in several biblical passages, such as when God tells Moses, "See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet" (Exod 7:1). Aaron's role was not to predict the future, but rather to be the spokesperson or mouthpiece of Moses, who evidently did not wish to speak to Pharaoh directly (see Exodus 4:10-17). Later, God also tells Moses, "I will raise up for [the Israelites] a prophet like you from among your own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet who shall speak to them everything that I command" (Deut 18:18).

Two other Hebrew words (*ro'eh* and *hozeh*) are closely related, but usually translated "seer" rather than "prophet." The word *ro'eh* seems to be older, as explained in the Bible itself: "Formerly in Israel, anyone who went to inquire of God would say, 'Come, let us go to the *seer*' (*ro'eh*); for the one who is now called a *prophet* (*nabi'*) was formerly called a *seer* (*ro'eh*)" (1 Sam 9:9). In contrast, *hozeh* seems to be a newer word, since it is used mostly in the Chronicles. All three words are used of three different people in 1 Chronicles 29:29: "Now the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the records of the *seer* (*ro'eh*) Samuel, and in the records of the *prophet* (*nabi'*) Nathan, and in the records of the *seer* (*hozeh*) Gad." In other texts, *nabi'* and *hozeh* are practically synonymous and are sometimes even used for the same people.

Hebrew	English	Torah/Law ¹	Fmr. Proph.	Lttr. Proph.	Writings	HB Total
<i>naba'</i>	to prophesy	3	17	87	9	116
<i>nabi'</i>	prophet; spokesperson	14	100	156	47	317
<i>nebi'ah</i>	prophetess	1	2	2	1	6
<i>nebu'ah</i>	prophecy; message	-	-	-	4	4
<i>hozeh</i>	seer	-	2	4	10	16
<i>ro'eh</i>	seer	-	4	1	6	11

In the biblical Greek of both the Septuagint (the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, abbreviated LXX) and the New Testament (originally written in

¹ The four sections of the Hebrew Bible (HB) or Tanakh are the Torah, Former Prophets, Latter Prophets, and other Writings.

Koine Greek), the word for "prophet" is προφητης (*prophetes*), which stems from two other words: *pro* + *phemi*. The verb *phemi* simply means "to speak." The preposition *pro* has many different possible meanings, depending on the context in which it is used; it can mean "before" (which is why many people think "prophets" are those who "speak before" something happens, thus "predicting" it), but it can also mean "for" or "on behalf of" (which is why most biblical scholars insist that "prophets" are those who "speak on behalf of God"). Which of these two possible meanings is more appropriate should be judged from the actual usage in the Bible.

Greek	English	Pent.	Hist.	Wisd.	Proph.	LXX	Total	Mark	Matt	Luke	John	Acts	Paul	Hebr	Cath	Rev	NT Total
προφητεια	prophecy	-	6	7	3	16	-	1	-	-	-	9	-	2	7		19
προφητειν	to prophesy	3	22	4	87	116	2	4	2	1	4	11	-	2	2		28
προφητης	prophet	15	172	18	120	325	6	37	29	14	30	14	2	4	8		144
προφητικος	prophetic	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-		2
προφητις	prophetess	1	3	-	1	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1		2
ψευδοπροφητης	false prophet	-	-	-	10	10	1	3	1	-	1	-	-	2	3		11

Prophetic Sacred Words:

A careful study of the hundreds of relevant texts shows that biblical prophets rarely speak about future events as if they were inevitable, but much more often transmit various kinds of messages on behalf of God to the people, conveying God's interpretation of the *past*, *present*, and *future* aspects of people's lives. Thus, a "prophet" in the Bible is primarily a "spokesperson for God," someone who receives messages from God and conveys them to other people. If a prophet speaks words that are not from God, he or she is considered a false prophet or sometimes called a prophet of another god (e.g. "prophets of Baal" in the Old Testament).

The messages transmitted by the biblical prophets are not only or primarily about the future, but about the past and present as well. They provide interpretations--from God's perspective--about past events, present circumstances, as well as future possibilities. Note that I say "future possibilities" rather than "future events," because when biblical prophets speak about the future, it is usually *not* about what *will* inevitably happen, but *rather* about what *might* happen, depending on how people choose to react and act: whether they listen to the prophetic message and live their lives accordingly, or ignore the words of the prophets and suffer the consequences.

- For example, when God sends the prophet Jonah to the city of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria (one of ancient Israel's fiercest enemies), Jonah's

initial message seems to be one of inevitable doom: "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" (3:1-4)

- Contrary to Jonah's own expectations, however, the Ninevites respond to his preaching by believing in God, proclaiming a fast, covering themselves with sackcloth and ashes as signs of repentance, and praying to God not to destroy them. (3:5-9)
- As a result, God changes his mind and does not destroy the city of Nineveh after all. (3:10)
- This turn of events does not please Jonah at all, since he had been looking forward to the destruction of the capital city of this great enemy empire! So God tries to teach Jonah further that God is more interested in mercy and forgiveness than in punishment and destruction! (4:1-11)

What can we learn from this story? At least one crucial point about the nature of biblical "prophecy," namely, that even when prophets speak about the future, they are not predicting an inevitable, unalterable future! Rather, they are warning people about a possible future that might come upon them if they continue in their evil ways and do not turn back to God. But if the people do listen to the prophet's message and react appropriately, with prayer, repentance, and faithfulness to God, then the future will look very different than what the prophet had foretold!

Of course, not all biblical texts make the conditional nature of the future so explicit; the two alternatives ("If you don't repent, here's what will happen; but if you do repent, then God will be merciful to you.") are not always clearly stated, but might remain implicit. Some texts may even presuppose that people will not repent, and thus will be punished for their wickedness; but if they do, even contrary to all expectations, then the disasters foretold by the prophets will not come about after all!

The role of biblical prophets as spokespersons for God, speaking God's words primarily to people of their own time (and only secondarily to people of future generations), can also be seen in the various **"introductory formulas"** found so often in the prophetic books of the Bible. The messages God wishes to convey through the prophets to the people are often preceded by some very familiar phrases:

- "Thus says the Lord,..." (used over 400 times in the Hebrew Bible!)
- "The word of the Lord came to [someone], saying..." (over 100 times!)
- "Thus shall you say to [someone],..." (43 times)
- "Hear the word of the Lord,..." (37 times)
- "Speak to [someone], saying..." (14 times)

Prophetic Deeds

Moreover, when biblical prophets convey God's messages to the people, they do so *not just in words* but sometimes *also in deeds*, not just by speaking or writing, but also by performing various symbolic and/or miraculous actions. Examples are found throughout the Bible, esp. in the stories surrounding the prophets Elijah and Elisha in the books of Kings and in the book of the prophet Ezekiel:

- Anointing people to rule as king (1 Sam 9:16; 16:13; 1 Kgs 1:34, 45; 19:16)
- Showing unusual power over nature (1 Kgs 17:1-8, 41-46)
- Feeding people by miraculous means (1 Kgs 17:8-16; 2 Kgs 4:1-7; 4:38-44)
- Healing some people (2 Kgs 5:1-19)
- Causing others to fall ill (2 Kgs 5:20-27)
- Rising the dead (1 Kgs 17:17-24; 2 Kgs 4:8-37)
- Performing other miraculous and/or symbolic actions (1 Kgs 18; 2 Kgs 6)

The Prophetic Books of the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh) / Old Testament:

Which books of the Bible are considered "prophetic"? The answer depends on *which* Bible you mean! Jews, Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox Christians all use slightly different versions of the Bible, count different books among the "prophets," and arrange them in different orders in their respective Bibles.

The **Hebrew Bible**, as used by ancient and modern Jews alike, has three main sections, the second of which is usually called "the Prophets" (*Nevi'im*).

This section is usually subdivided between the books of the "Former Prophets" (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings) and those of the "Latter Prophets" (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and one book containing "The Twelve" shorter prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi).

The books of Daniel and Lamentations, however, are *not* considered part of this group, but instead are found among the miscellaneous "Writings" (*Ketuvim*) in the third main section of the Hebrew Bible.

In all **Christian Bibles**, the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings are not classified as "prophetic books" but rather considered to be "historical books." In contrast, the "prophetic books" (including four "major prophets" and twelve

separate books of the "minor prophets") are placed at the very end of the Old Testament in Christian Bibles, although there are further differences:

- The final section of most Protestant Bibles contains Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the twelve shorter prophets.
- Catholic Bibles contain all of the above, but also include the book of Baruch and a longer version of Daniel (with two additional chapters), considered since the Reformation as apocryphal and not considered canonical. Lutherans have also non-canonical books in their Bibles if they possibly can.

Orthodox Christian Bibles contain the same books as the Catholic versions, but they are arranged in a significantly different order.

The categorization of a biblical book can significantly affect *how you interpret it*, especially in the case of the Book of Daniel. Is this a "prophetic" book much like all the other prophets, as some Protestant Christians emphasize? Or is it somewhat "prophetic" but more accurately described as an "apocalyptic" book, as other Protestants and most Catholics maintain? Or is it not really "prophetic" at all, but rather belonging to a different literary genre that should be read differently, as most Jews agree?

Moreover, most biblical scholars emphasize that in order to interpret the writings of the biblical prophets properly, one must understand the ***historical context*** in which the prophets lived, since they were primarily addressing the people and political situations of their own day. To complicate matters, the canonical order of the prophetic books (how they are arranged in our Bibles) is not the same as the historical order (when they were originally written):

Era / Century BCE	Prophetic Books [with other named Prophets]
Pre-Monarchy (13th–11th Cent.)	Books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, beginning of 1 Samuel
Early/United Monarchy (10th Cent.)	1 and 2 Samuel, most of 1 Kings [incl. Nathan & Ahijah]
Divided Monarchy (9th Cent.)	rest of 1 and 2 Kings [esp. Elijah & Elisha]
End of Northern Kingdom of Israel (8th Cent.)	Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah 1-39
End of Southern Kingdom of Judah	Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, most of

(7th Cent.)	Jeremiah
Babylonian Exile (597/587–520 B.C.)	some of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah 40-55
Early Post-Exilic Restoration (late 6th - early 5th Cent.)	Haggai, Zechariah 1-8; [also Ezra & Nehemiah]
Persian Era (5th–4th Cent.)	Isaiah 56-66, Jonah, Zechariah 9-14, Obadiah, Joel, Malachi
Hellenistic Era: Ptolemies (3rd Cent.)	Daniel 1-6 (more prophetic)
Hellenistic Era: Seleucids (early 2nd Cent.)	Daniel 7-12 (more apocalyptic)

Prophets and their prophecies in the Old Testament

In addition to the prophets who have separate biblical books named after them (and who are sometimes also mentioned in other biblical books), quite a few other people are also called "prophet" or "prophetess" in the Hebrew Bible. Many of them are *true prophets* (who speak on behalf of the God of Israel), while some are *false prophets* (who serve other gods of other nations). Moreover, whole *groups* of prophets (lit. called "the sons of the prophets") appear in certain biblical stories. The following are some of the most important individuals referred to as "prophets" of God:

Within the **Torah or Pentateuch** (the first five "Books of Moses"), only a few examples:

- **Abraham** (Gen 20:7)
- Moses' brother **Aaron** (Exod 7:1) and their sister **Miriam** (Exod 15:20)
- Seventy elders in the desert, including **Eldad** and **Medad** (Num 11:25-29)
- **Moses** (Deut 34:10) and "a prophet like Moses" who is to come later (Deut 18:15-19)
- Within the **Historical Books** (esp. the "Former Prophets" of the HB, and the books of Chronicles), many more examples:
 - **Deborah** (Judges 4:4), also known as a "judge"
 - **Samuel** (1 Sam 3:20; 19:20; 2 Chron 35:18; etc.), also called a "seer" (1 Sam 9:11-19; 1 Chron 9:22; 26:28; 29:29)
 - **Saul**, just after he was anointed by Samuel (1 Sam 10:5-13; 19:20-24)
 - **Gad** (1 Sam 22:5), also called King David's "seer" (2 Sam 24:11; 1 Chron 21:9; 29:29; 2 Chron 29:25)

- **Nathan** (2 Sam 7:2; 12:25; 1 Kings 1:8-45; 1 Chron 17:1; 29:29; 2 Chron 9:29; 29:25)
- **Ahijah** the Shilonite (1 Kgs 11:29; 14:2-18; 2 Chron 9:29)
- An **anonymous old prophet** in Bethel (1 Kgs 13:11-29)
- **Jehu**, son of Hanani (1 Kgs 16:7-12)
- **Obadiah** and a hundred prophets who hide from Jezebel (1 Kgs 18:4)
- **Elijah** (1 Kgs 18:22—19:16; 2 Chron 21:12)
- **Elisha**, son of Shaphat and successor of Elijah (1 Kgs 19:16; 2 Kgs 2:3—9:1)
- **Micaiah**, son of Imlah (1 Kgs 22:8-23; 2 Chron 18:7-22)
- **Groups of prophets** at *Bethel* (2 Kgs 2:3), at *Jericho* (2:5-15), and associated with Elisha at *Gilgal* (2 Kgs 4—6)
- **Jonah**, son of Amittai (2 Kgs 14:25)
- **Isaiah**, son of Amoz (2 Kgs 19:2—20:14; 2 Chron 26:22; 32:20, 32)
- **Huldah**, the wife of Shallum (2 Kgs 22:14; 2 Chron 34:22)
- **Shemaiah** (2 Chron 12:5-15)
- **Iddo** (2 Chron 13:22), at first called a "seer" (2 Chron 9:29; 12:15)
- **Azariah**, son of Obed (2 Chron 15:8)
- **Hanani** the "seer" (2 Chron 16:7-10; 19:2)
- **Eliezer**, son of Dodavahu (2 Chron 20:37)
- **Obed** (2 Chron 28:9)
- **Asaph** and his descendants (2 Chron 29:30; 35:15)
- **Jeduthun**, the king's "seer" (2 Chron 35:15)
- **Jeremiah** (2 Chron 36:12)
- **Haggai** and **Zechariah**, son of Iddo (Ezra 5:1; 6:14)
- **Amos** (also called a "seer" in Amos 7:12)

Note: **Daniel** is never called a "prophet" in the Hebrew Bible!

Although all of these prophets speak on behalf of God, rather than on their own authority, how they came to be prophets or when God first commissioned them for this role is only rarely narrated or alluded to in the Bible. The best known stories include:

The call of Samuel (1 Sam 3:1-21)
 The call of Elisha (1 Kgs 19:16-21)
 The call of Amos (Amos 7:15)
 The call of Isaiah (Isa 6:1-13)
 The call of Jeremiah (Jer 1:4-10)
 The call of Ezekiel (Ezek 1:1—3:27)

False prophets, or prophets serving other gods, are sometimes also mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. Several biblical texts mention explicit criteria for distinguishing true vs. false prophets (Deut 13:1-5; 18:20-22), while other texts name certain groups or individuals as false prophets:

- Prophets of Baal and/or prophets of Asherah (1 Kgs 18:19-40; 2 Kgs 10:19; Jeremiah 2:8)
- False prophets opposed to Jeremiah (Jer 5:31; 14:13-15; etc.)

Prophets and their prophecies in the New Testament

Most of the NT references to "**prophets**" (mentioned 144 times in the NT, 116 of which are in the Gospels and Acts) are to the prophets of the OT, either generically as a group or often explicitly naming individual prophets (esp. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Elijah, but sometimes also Jonah, Daniel, Elisha, Joel, Moses, Samuel, and even King David!). Some NT passages speak of the role of prophets in general, such as when Jesus says, "Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward" (Matt 10:41).

In addition to these references to the ancient Hebrew prophets, the NT also refers to certain people of its own day as "prophets," including John the Baptist, Jesus, and many early Christian leaders, either individually or generically:

Four Gospels

- The word "prophet" refers both to *John the Baptist* (Mark 11:32; Matt 21:46; Luke 1:76; 7:26; 20:6; cf. John 1:21) and to *Jesus* (Mark 6:15; 8:28; Matt 14:5; 16:14; 21:11, 46; Luke 7:16, 39; 9:19; 24:19; John 4:19; 6:14; 7:40; 9:17).
- The infancy narrative in Luke's Gospel also mentions an old "prophetess" named *Anna* who frequented the Jerusalem Temple, where she encounters the Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus (Luke 2:36).

Apostle Paul's Letters

- "Prophets" are mentioned right after "apostles" when listing various categories of early Christian leaders (1 Cor 12:28-29; cf. 14:29-37).

Acts of the Apostles:

- Five men are named as "prophets and teachers" of the church in Antioch: "*Barnabas, Simeon* who was called Niger, *Lucius* of Cyrene, *Manaen* a member of the court of Herod the ruler, and *Saul* [i.e. Paul]" (13:1).
- Other individuals named as Christian prophets include *Judas* and *Silas* (15:32) and *Agabus* (21:10).
- The *four daughters of the evangelist Philip* "had the gift of prophesying" (21:8).

Book of Revelation:

- Saints, apostles, and/or prophets are mentioned together in several passages (11:18; 16:6; 18:20-24, where the references are most likely not (or not only) to the OT prophets but mostly to early Christian leaders (this is especially clear in 22:9).
- Near the beginning of Revelation, in the letter to the church in Thyatira, a woman named *Jezebel* is also denounced as a false "prophetess" (Rev 2:20).

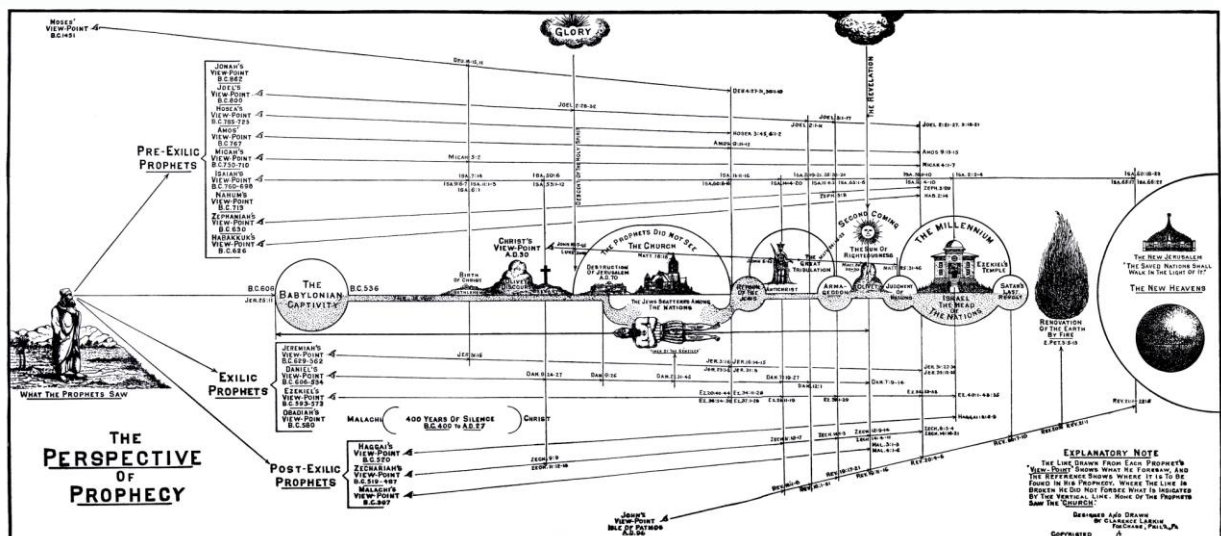
In addition to all these individuals who are named prophets, the gift of "prophecy" (Gk. προφητεία / *propheteia*) and the action of "prophesying" (Gk. προφητεύω / *propheteuo*) are very important in the life of the early Christian communities, as seen in various NT texts:

- In several letters, Paul speaks of "prophecy" as one of the gifts given to some Christians for the benefit of the community:
See Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 12:10; 13:2, 8; 14:6, 22; 1 Thess 5:20; cf. 1 Tim 1:18; 4:14.
- Paul also refers to praying and "prophesying" and other spiritual practices as normal parts of the worship services of his early Christian communities:
See 1 Cor 11:4-5; 13:9; 14:1-40.



The Perspective of Prophecy

The Chart on "The Perspective of Prophecy" shows what each of the prophets foresaw of future events from the Birth of Christ on down to the New Heavens and the New Earth. A careful study of the Chart will show that the Prophet Nahum saw nothing beyond his time, while the Prophet Isaiah saw more and the farthest of all the prophets.



To enlarge copy and past

There is no fact in history more clearly established than the fact of the "First Coming" of Christ. But as His "First Coming" did not fulfill all the prophecies

associated with His "Coming," it is evident that there must be another "Coming" to completely fulfil them. It was because the religious leaders of Christ's day failed to distinguish between the prophecies that related to His "First Coming," and those that related to His "Second Coming" that they rejected Him. Peter tells us (1Pet. 1:10-11) that the prophets themselves did not clearly perceive the difference between the "**Sufferings**" and "**Glory**" of Christ. That is, they did not see that there was a "**TIME SPACE**" between the "**Cross**" and the "**Crown**," and that the "Cross" would precede the "Crown." But we have no such excuse. We live on this side of the "Cross," and we can readily pick out all the prophecies that were fulfilled at Christ's "First Coming" and apply the remainder to His "Second Coming." It is clear then that Christ's "First Coming," important as it was, is not the "doctrinal center" of the Scriptures, that is, Christ's First Coming was not the center of a circle that contains all doctrine, but was one of the foci of an ellipse of which the other is the "**SECOND COMING.**"

This is shown on the above Chart on "The Two Comings." The chart takes in the whole Mediatorial Work of Christ, Prophetic, Priestly and Kingly. This included in an ellipse, the foci of which are "First" and "Second" Comings of Christ. The "Cross" represents His "First Coming" and the "Crown" His "Second Coming." Between the "Fall" and the "First Coming" we have the "**ALTAR**," which points backward to the "Fall" and forward to the "Cross." Between the "Comings" we have the "**TABLE**" which points backward to the "Cross" and forward to the "Second Coming." Between the "Second Coming" and the surrender of the "Kingdom" we have the "**THRONE**," which points backward to the "Second Coming" and forward to the surrendering of the "Kingdom." The Apostle Paul in his epistles clearly distinguishes between the "Comings" and their doctrinal significance. In his letter to the Hebrews he classifies Christ's "appeared" (Heb. 9:26), "Now to appear" (Heb. 9:24), "Shall He appear" (Heb. 9:28). In his letter to Titus (Titus 2:11-12), he brings out the doctrinal significance of these "appearings." As a Prophet He died for our "**JUSTIFICATION**," as a Priest He lives at the right hand of God not only as our Advocate, but our "**SANCTIFIER**," and when He comes again as a King it will be for our "**GLORIFICATION.**"

While the First and Second Comings of Christ are separated by this Dispensation they are nevertheless not complete in themselves, the Second necessitated the First, and the First demands the Second. They are both necessary to complete the Plan of Salvation. The First Coming was for the salvation of my "SOUL"; the Second is for the salvation of my "BODY," for there can be no resurrection of the body until Christ comes back.

1. The Second Coming, the Testimony of Jesus Himself

Matt 16:27. "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

Matt. 25:31-32. "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the 'Throne of His Glory;' and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."

John 14:2-3. "In my father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will **come again**, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

John 21:22. "If I will that he tarry till **I come** what is that to thee? Follow thou me."

2. The Testimony of Heavenly Beings

Acts 1:10-11. "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This **SAME JESUS**, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come **IN LIKE MANNER** as ye have seen him go into heaven."

This passage declares that the **SAME JESUS** shall return **IN LIKE MANNER** as He went, that is, that His return will be **visible** and personal. The two "**men**" that "stood by" were probably Moses and Elijah. They appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. They were doubtless the "**two men**" who testified to the women at the tomb that Jesus had risen (Luke 24:4-5), and they will be the "**Two Witnesses**" that shall testify during the Tribulation. Rev. 11:3-12.

3. The Testimony of the Apostles

PAUL-"For our conversation is in heaven; **from whence also we look for the Saviour**, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the work to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3:20-21.

"Looking for that '**Blessed Hope**' and the '**Glorious Appearing**' of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13.

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the '**Second Time**' without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

JAMES-"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the **coming of the Lord.**" James 5:7.

PETER-"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and **coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty." 2 Pet.1:16.

Peter here refers to the Transfiguration of Christ on the Mount (Matt. 17:1-5), which was a type of His Second Coming. Moses was a type of the "resurrection saints," and Elijah of those who shall be translated without dying. Peter, James and John were a type of the Jewish Remnant that shall see Him when He comes, and the remaining disciples at the foot of the mount, unable to cast the demon out of the boy, of those professed followers of Jesus who shall be left behind at the Rapture, and who shall be powerless to cast the demons out of the demon-possessed people of that period

JUDE-"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoke against him." Jude 14-10.

JOHN-"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him **at his coming.**" 1 John 2:28.

"Behold, he **cometh with clouds**; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Rev. 1:7.

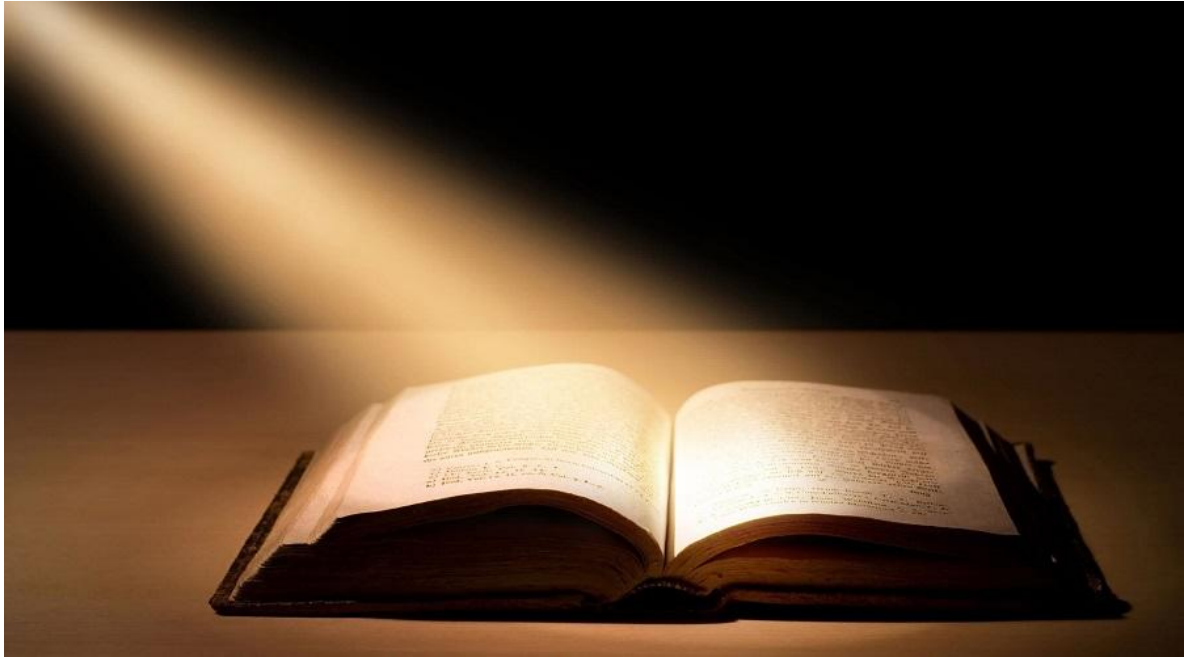
4. The testimony of the Lord's Supper

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death **till He come.**" 1 Cor. 11:26.

The Lord's Supper is not a permanent ordinance. It will be discontinued when the Lord returns. It is a Memorial Feast. It looks back to the "Cross" and forward to the "Coming." An engagement ring is not intended to be permanent. It is

simply a pledge of mutual love and loyalty, and gives place to the wedding ring. So the Lord's Table may be looked upon as a betrothal pledge left to the Church during the absence of her betrothed.

Paul in all his epistles refers but 13 times to Baptism, while he speaks of the Lord's return 50 times. One verse in every 30 in the New Testament refers to Christ's Second Coming. There are 20 times as many references in the Old Testament to Christ's Second Coming as to His First Coming.



Bible Verses about Prophecy

(KJV 1611)

(Sort by relevance and not by book order)

2 Peter 1:21 - For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost.

Acts 2:16-21 - *16:* But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;
17: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:
18: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:
19: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

20: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 - 1: Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,
2: That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.
3: Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;
4: Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Amos 3:7 - Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

Joel 2:28-32 – 28: And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:
29: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.
30: And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.
31: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.
32: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Hebrews 8:8-12 - 8: For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

9: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.
10: For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their

hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:
11: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

12: For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

13: In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

Acts 26:23 - That Christ should suffer, [and] that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

Acts 13:27 - For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled [them] in condemning [him].

Acts 2:25-28 - 25: For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:
26: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

27: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

28: Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

Acts 1:20 - For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.

Acts 1:16 - Men [and] brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

John 13:18 - I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

Mark 14:27 - And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

Mark 9:11-13 - 11: And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come?

12: And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

13: But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

Micah 5:2 - But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, [though] thou be little among the thousands of Judah, [yet] out of thee shall he come forth unto me [that is] to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth [have been] from of old, from everlasting.

Ezekiel 37:15 - The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

Ezekiel 36:16 - Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Ezekiel 35:1 - Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Ezekiel 34:1 - And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Ezekiel 33:23 - Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Ezekiel 33:1 - Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Ezekiel 32:17 - It came to pass also in the twelfth year, in the fifteenth [day] of the month, [that] the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Ezekiel 32:1 - And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, in the first [day] of the month, [that] the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Jeremiah 45:1 - The word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,

Isaiah 46:10 - Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times [the things] that are not [yet] done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

Isaiah 7:14 - Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Psalms 69:25 - Let their habitation be desolate; [and] let none dwell in their tents.

1 Peter 2:24 - Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were

healed.

Hebrews 12:26 - Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

Acts 2:6-21 – 6: Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7: And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

8: And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9: Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

10: Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

11: Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

12: And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

13: Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

14: But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

16: But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

17: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

20: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Zechariah 8:18 - And the word of the LORD of hosts came unto me, saying,

Revelation 2:10 - Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the

devil shall cast [some] of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Jude 1:18 - How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

Jude 1:17 - But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

1 John 2:18 - Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

2 Peter 3:1-18 –1: This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

2: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

3: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4: And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

5: For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

8: But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9: The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10: But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

11: Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

12: Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13: Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14: Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

15: And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

16: As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

17: Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

18: But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

1 Peter 2:25 - For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

1 Peter 2:22 - Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

1 Peter 2:10 - Which in time past [were] not a people, but [are] now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

1 Peter 2:6 - Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

Hebrews 10:17 - And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

Hebrews 10:16 - This [is] the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

Hebrews 5:6 - As he saith also in another [place], Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Hebrews 5:5 - So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

Hebrews 4:5-7 – 5: And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.
6: Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

7: Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Hebrews 4:3 - For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

Hebrews 3:7-11 – 7: Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,

8: Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

10: Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

11: So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

Hebrews 2:12 - Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

Hebrews 2:6-8 –6: But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

7: Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

8: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

Hebrews 1:13 - But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

Hebrews 1:10-12 - 10: And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

11: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

12: And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

Hebrews 1:9 - Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, [even] thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Hebrews 1:8 - But unto the Son [he saith], Thy throne, O God, [is] for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness [is] the sceptre of thy kingdom.

Hebrews 1:5 - For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

2 Timothy 3:16 - All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Ephesians 4:10 - He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

Ephesians 4:8-10 – 8: Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9: (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10: He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

Ephesians 4:8 - Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Galatians 3:8 - And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, [saying], In thee shall all nations be blessed.

1 Corinthians 15:54 - So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Romans 15:12 - And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

Romans 11:27 - For this [is] my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

Romans 11:26 - And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

Romans 10:16 - But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

Romans 9:33 - As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Romans 9:26 - And it shall come to pass, [that] in the place where it was said unto them, Ye [are] not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

Romans 9:25 - As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.

Acts 28:25-27 – 25: And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,

26: Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:

27: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart,

Acts 27:18-44 –18: And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship;

19: And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

20: And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

21: But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

22: And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

23: For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

24: Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

25: Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

26: Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

27: But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country;

28: And sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms.

29: Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

30: And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,

31: Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

32: Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

33: And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing.

34: Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.

35: And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.

36: Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.

37: And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.

38: And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

39: And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

40: And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

41: And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

42: And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape.

43: But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land:

44: And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

Acts 27:10 - And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.

Acts 26:22 - Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:

Acts 21:11 - And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at

Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver [him] into the hands of the Gentiles.

Acts 15:17 - That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

Acts 15:16 - After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

Acts 13:48 - And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

Acts 13:47 - For so hath the Lord commanded us, [saying], I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

Acts 13:41 - Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

Acts 13:40 - Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets;

Acts 13:35 - Wherefore he saith also in another [psalm], Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Acts 13:34 - And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, [now] no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

Acts 13:33 - God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

Acts 13:29 - And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took [him] down from the tree, and laid [him] in a sepulchre.

Acts 4:26 - The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

Acts 4:25 - Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

Acts 4:11 - This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

Acts 3:25 - Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

Acts 3:23 - And it shall come to pass, [that] every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

Acts 3:22 - For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Acts 2:35 - Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

Acts 2:34 - For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

Acts 2:31 - He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

Acts 2:30 - Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

Acts 2:1 - And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Acts 1:16-20 -16: Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

17: For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

18: Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

19: And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.

20: For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.

John 19:37 - And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

John 19:29 - Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put [it] upon hyssop, and put [it] to his mouth.

John 19:28 - After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

John 19:24 - They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

John 18:1-9 - 1: When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

2: And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.

3: Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

4: Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

5: They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

6: As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

7: Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

8: Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

9: That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

Ten Prophecies about Jesus' birth

“Jesus’ birth, life, and death were foretold, predicted, and recorded hundreds of years before the historic night in Bethlehem.”

Here are ten prophecies from the Old Testament, fulfilled in the coming of Jesus:

1. Jesus will come from the line of Abraham. *Prophecy: Genesis 12:3. Fulfilled: Matthew 1:1.*

2. Jesus’ mother will be a virgin. *Prophecy: Isaiah 7:14. Fulfilled: Matthew 1:18–23.*

3. Jesus will be a descendent of Isaac and Jacob. *Prophecy: Genesis 17:19 and Numbers 24:17. Fulfilled: Matthew 1:2.*

4. Jesus will be born in the town Bethlehem. *Prophecy: Micah 5:2. Fulfilled: Luke 2:1–7.*
5. Jesus will be called out of Egypt. *Prophecy: Hosea 11:1. Fulfilled: Matthew 2:13–15.*
6. Jesus will be a member of the tribe of Judah. *Prophecy: Genesis 49:10. Fulfilled: Luke 3:33.*
7. Jesus will enter the temple. This is important because the temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 and was never rebuilt. *Prophecy: Malachi 3:1. Fulfilled: Luke 2:25–27.*
8. Jesus will be from the lineage of King David. *Prophecy: Jeremiah 23:5. Fulfilled: Matthew 1:6.*
9. Jesus' birth will be accompanied with great suffering and sorrow. *Prophecy: Jeremiah 31:15. Fulfilled: Matthew 2:16.*
10. Jesus will live a perfect life, die by crucifixion, resurrect from death, ascend into heaven, and sit at the right hand of God. *Prophecies: Psalm 22:16; Psalm 16:10; Isaiah 53:10–11; Psalm 68:18; Psalm 110:1. Fulfilled: 1 Peter 2:21–22; Luke 23:33; Acts 2:25–32; Acts 1:9; Hebrews 1:3.*

Isaiah's Prophecies

Isaiah the prophet lived in Jerusalem about 2700 years ago, during the time in which the Assyrian Empire conquered the northern part of the Jewish homeland. The book of Isaiah contains many prophecies that are interpreted by Christians (including us at this web site) as being about the Messiah Jesus Christ. Today, we can see with our own eyes that many of Isaiah's prophecies have found fulfillment with the worldwide dispersion of Jews, the worldwide persecution of Jews, the recent worldwide migration of Jews back to Israel during the past century, the recent re-establishment and restoration of Israel, and the worldwide impact that Jews have had on the world.

Isaiah 7:14

Isaiah foreshadowed the virgin birth of Jesus

Isaiah 9:6-7

There would be a son called God

Isaiah 13:19

Babylon's kingdom would be overthrown, permanently

Isaiah 14:23

Babylon would be reduced to swampland

Isaiah 35:4-6

He would perform miracles

Isaiah 40:1-5,9

The Messiah would be preceded by a messenger

Isaiah 45:1

Babylon's gates would open for Cyrus

Isaiah 49:6

God's salvation would reach the ends of the earth

Isaiah 49:13-17

God will never forget the children of Israel

Isaiah 50:6

Jesus was spat upon and beaten

Isaiah 53:1-3

The Messiah would be rejected

Isaiah 53:4-6

God's servant would die for our sins

Isaiah 53:7

God's servant would be silent before his accusers

Isaiah 53:9

God's servant would be buried in a rich man's tomb

Isaiah 53:12

God's servant would be "numbered with the transgressors"



Jerusalem: The Tomb of Yeshua (Jesus)

Messianic Prophecy in Isaiah:

THE PROPHECY	THE FULFILLMENT
The Messiah:	Jesus of Nazareth:
Will be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14)	Was born of a virgin named Mary (Luke 1:26-31)
Will have a Galilean ministry (Isaiah 9:1,2)	Ministry began in Galilee of the Gentiles (Matthew 4:13-16)
Will be an heir to the throne of David (Isaiah 9:7; 11:1, 10)	Was given the throne of His father David (Luke 1:32, 33)
Will have His way prepared (Isaiah 40:3-5)	Was announced by John the Baptist (John 1:19-28)
Will be spat on and struck (Isaiah 50:6)	Was spat on and beaten (Matthew 26:67)
Will be exalted (Isaiah 52:13)	Was highly exalted by God and the People (Philippians 2:9, 10)
Will be disfigured by suffering (Isaiah 52:14; 53:2)	Was scourged by Roman soldiers who gave Him a crown of thorns (Mark 15:15-19)
Will make a blood atonement (Isaiah 53:5)	Shed His blood to atone for our sins (1 Peter 1:2)
Will be widely rejected (Isaiah 53:1,3)	Was not accepted by many (John 12:37, 38)

Will bear our sins and sorrows (Isaiah 53:4, 5)	Died because of our sins (Romans 4L25; 1Peter 2:24, 25)
Will be our substitute (Isaiah 53:6,8)	Died in our place (Romans 5:6, 8; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
Will voluntarily accept our guilt and punishment for sin (Isaiah 53:7,8)	Jesus took on our sins (John 1:29; Romans 6:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
Gentiles will seek Him (Isaiah 11:10)	Gentiles came to speak to Jesus (John 12:20,21)
Will be silent before His accusers (Isaiah 53:7)	Was silent before Herod and his court (Luke 23:9)
Will save us who believe in Him (Isaiah 53:12)	Provided salvation for all who believe (John 3:16; Acts 16:31)
Will die with transgressors (Isaiah 53:12)	Was numbered with the transgressors (Mark 15:27, 28; Luke 22:37)
Will heal the brokenhearted (Isaiah 61:1,2)	Healed the brokenhearted (Luke 4:18, 19)
God's Spirit will rest on Him (Isaiah 11:2)	The Spirit of God descended on Jesus (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; 4:1)
Will be buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9)	Was buried in the tomb of Joseph, a rich man from Arimathea (Matthew 27:57-60; John 19:38-42)
He will judge the earth with righteousness (Isaiah 11:4,5)	Jesus was given authority to judge (John 5:27; Luke 19:22; 2 Timothy 4:1,8)

Forty-four Prophecies Fulfilled in Jesus Christ

	Prophecies About Jesus	Old Testament Scripture	New Testament Fulfilment
1	Messiah would be born of a woman.	Genesis 3:15	Matthew 1:20 Galatians 4:4
2	Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1 Luke 2:4-6
3	Messiah would be born of a virgin.	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:22-23

			Luke 1:26-31
4	Messiah would come from the line of Abraham.	Genesis 12:3 Genesis 22:18	Matthew 1:1 Romans 9:5
5	Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Genesis 17:19 Genesis 21:12	Luke 3:34
6	Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob.	Numbers 24:17	Matthew 1:2
7	Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah.	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:33 Hebrews 7:14
8	Messiah would be heir to King David's throne.	2 Samuel 7:12-13 Isaiah 9:7	Luke 1:32-33 Romans 1:3
9	Messiah's throne will be anointed and eternal.	Psalms 45:6-7 Daniel 2:44	Luke 1:33 Hebrews 1:8-12
10	Messiah would be called Immanuel.	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23
11	Messiah would spend a season in Egypt.	Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:14-15
12	A massacre of children would happen at Messiah's birthplace.	Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:16-18
13	A messenger would prepare the way for Messiah	Isaiah 40:3-5	Luke 3:3-6
14	Messiah would be rejected by his own people.	Psalms 69:8 Isaiah 53:3	John 1:11 John 7:5
15	Messiah would be a prophet.	Deuteronomy 18:15	Acts 3:20-22
16	Messiah would be preceded by Elijah.	Malachi 4:5-6	Matthew 11:13-14
17	Messiah would be declared the Son of	Psalms 2:7	Matthew 3:16-17

	God.		
18	Messiah would be called a Nazarene.	Isaiah 11:1	Matthew 2:23
19	Messiah would bring light to Galilee.	Isaiah 9:1-2	Matthew 4:13-16
20	Messiah would speak in parables.	Psalms 78:2-4 Isaiah 6:9-10	Matthew 13:10-15, 34-35
21	Messiah would be sent to heal the brokenhearted.	Isaiah 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19
22	Messiah would be a priest after the order of Melchizedek.	Psalms 110:4	Hebrews 5:5-6
23	Messiah would be called King.	Psalms 2:6 Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 27:37 Mark 11:7-11
24	Messiah would be praised by little children.	Psalms 8:2	Matthew 21:16
25	Messiah would be betrayed.	Psalms 41:9 Zechariah 11:12-13	Luke 22:47-48 Matthew 26:14-16
26	Messiah's price money would be used to buy a potter's field.	Zechariah 11:12-13	Matthew 27:9-10
27	Messiah would be falsely accused.	Psalms 35:11	Mark 14:57-58
28	Messiah would be silent before his accusers.	Isaiah 53:7	Mark 15:4-5
29	Messiah would be spat upon and struck.	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67
30	Messiah would be hated without cause.	Psalms 35:19 Psalms 69:4	John 15:24-25
31	Messiah would be crucified with criminals.	Isaiah 53:12	Matthew 27:38 Mark 15:27-28

32	Messiah would be given vinegar to drink.	Psalms 69:21	Matthew 27:34 John 19:28-30
33	Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced.	Psalms 22:16 Zechariah 12:10	John 20:25-27
34	Messiah would be mocked and ridiculed.	Psalms 22:7-8	Luke 23:35
35	Soldiers would gamble for Messiah's garments.	Psalms 22:18	Luke 23:34 Matthew 27:35-36
36	Messiah's bones would not be broken.	Exodus 12:46 Psalms 34:20	John 19:33-36
37	Messiah would be forsaken by God.	Psalms 22:1	Matthew 27:46
38	Messiah would pray for his enemies.	Psalms 109:4	Luke 23:34
39	Soldiers would pierce Messiah's side.	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:34
40	Messiah would be buried with the rich.	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
41	Messiah would resurrect from the dead.	Psalms 16:10 Psalms 49:15	Matthew 28:2-7 Acts 2:22-32
42	Messiah would ascend to heaven.	Psalms 24:7-10	Mark 16:19 Luke 24:51
43	Messiah would be seated at God's right hand.	Psalms 68:18 Psalms 110:1	Mark 16:19 Matthew 22:44
44	Messiah would be a sacrifice for sin.	Isaiah 53:5-12	Romans 5:6-8

Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah

Jeremiah preached from about 628 BC to 586 BC (about 2600 years ago) in Jerusalem. During that time, Babylon took control of Jerusalem. Babylon began taking Jews as captives to Babylon as early as 605 BC and 597 BC. Babylon destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC. Jeremiah prophesied that the Jews would be scattered from their homeland and persecuted. He also said that God would

protect the Jews from total destruction and that they would one day return to their homeland and that the second Israel would be more impressive than the first. Today, we can see with our own eyes that the Jews have indeed survived widespread persecutions and that they have re-established Israel (in 1948), after 19 centuries of exile and persecutions throughout the world..

Subject	Prophecy	Fulfillment
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Jeremiah 23:5-6a	Luke 3:23-31
The Messiah would be God.	Jeremiah 23:5-6b	John 13:13
The Messiah would be both God and Man.	Jeremiah 23:5-6c	1 Timothy 3:16
The Messiah would be born of a virgin.	Jeremiah 31:22	Matthew 1:18-20
The Messiah would be the new covenant.	Jeremiah 31:31	Matthew 26:28
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Jeremiah 33:14-15	Luke 3:23-31

The Messiah would be a descendant of David

Prophecy

Jeremiah 23:5-6b

"⁵ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. ⁶ In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Similar prophecies

Subject	Prophecy	Fulfillment
The Messiah would be the creator of all.	Psalms 102:25-27b	John 1:3
The Messiah would be Lord.	Psalms 110:1a	Matthew 22:41-45
The Messiah would be holy.	Daniel 9:24b	Luke 1:35
The Messiah would be God.	Psalms 45:6-7b	Hebrews 1:8-9
The Messiah would be God.	Isaiah 7:14c	John 12:45

The Messiah would be God.	Isaiah 40:3c	John 10:30
The Messiah would be God.	Jeremiah 23:5-6b	John 13:13
The Messiah would be both God and man.	Jeremiah 23:5-6c	1 Timothy 3:16
The Messiah would be both God and man (the "Mighty God").	Isaiah 9:6d	John 10:30
The Messiah would be God	Zechariah 11:10-11b	John 14:7
The Messiah would be God	Zechariah 11:12-13d	John 12:45
The Messiah would be both God and man.	Zechariah 12:10b	John 10:30
The Messiah would be both God and man	Zechariah 13:7c	John 14:9

Fulfilment

John 13:13

"Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am."

John 12:45

" And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me."

Additional Fulfilment Examples

Matthew 22:41-45, Mark 12:35-37, Luke 20:41-44, John 1:1-14, 8:58, 10:30, 10:38, 14:7-10, Romans 9:5, Philippians 2:5-7 Colossians 2:9 1 Timothy 3:16, Titus 2:13, Hebrews 1:3, 1:8-9, 2:14

The Hebrew text for the name LORD used in Jeremiah 23:6 is "YHWH" (commonly rendered "Jehovah"), clearly referring to God (and not a social position of man). The King described here is called, "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS," signifying his deity.² Whereas Israel's good kings and bad kings alike were sinners, this descendent of David would be holy and righteous.

² Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum in his book "Messianic Christology" writes that while there were people throughout the scriptures who had names with "Jehovah" (rendered "LORD" in the King James translation) in them, "It needs to be realized that in none of these cases are all four of the letters YHVH found. Usually twos letters are found, sometimes three, but nowhere are all four letters of the name of God ever used in relation to a human being."

In Jeremiah 33:16, the same name, "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" is applied to Jerusalem. Some point to this to say that the name in Jeremiah 23:6 also refers to Jerusalem. However, given the geneological reference of Jeremiah 23:5 and the fact that Jeremiah presents this righteous King as a contrast to the wicked Kings of the past, this verse clearly indicates a person and not a city.³ Why is the name "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" given to Jerusalem in Jeremiah 33:16? Because One who rules with righteousness like no other is upon the throne in Zion. Jerusalem will be ruled by a just and righteousness King and the city itself will take on these attributes. The city is immersed in the glorious radiance of a holy King and cannot help but be transformed and reflect the righteousness bestowed upon it. Who is this king? It is Jesus, King Messiah, our savior, and our righteousness (1 Corinthians 1:30). All believers in the saving work of Jesus become His bride, and just as a bride takes on the name of her husband, so Jerusalem takes on the name of her King, "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

The Messiah would be God

Prophecy

Jeremiah 23:5-6b

"⁵ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. ⁶ In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Similar prophecies

Subject	Prophecy	Fulfillment
The Messiah would be a descendant of Shem.	Genesis 9:26	Luke 3:23-36
The Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham.	Genesis 12:3	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham.	Genesis 18:17-18a	Matthew 1:1

³ Dr. James Smith, in his book "What the Bible Teaches About the Promised Messiah" notes that the Jews interpreted "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" in [Jeremiah 23:6](#) as personal Messianic title, and that it is recorded as such in the Targum, Midrash, and Talmud.

The Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham.	Genesis 22:18a	Galations 3:16
The Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Genesis 17:19	Luke 3:23-34
The Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Genesis 21:12	Luke 3:23-34
The Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Genesis 26:4	Luke 3:23-34
The Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob.	Genesis 28:14a	Luke 3:23-34
The Messiah would be a descendant of Judah.	Genesis 49:10a	Luke 3:23-33
The Messiah would be a descendant of Judah.	1 Chronicles 5:2	Luke 3:23-33
The Messiah would be a descendant of Boaz & Ruth.	Ruth 4:12-17	Luke 3:23-32
The Messiah would be a descendant of Jesse.	Isaiah 11:1a	Luke 3:23-32
The Messiah would be a descendant of Jesse.	Isaiah 11:10a	Luke 3:23-32
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	2 Samuel 7:12-13	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	2 Samuel 7:16	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	1 Chronicles 17:11-12a	Luke 3:23-31
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Psalms 89:3-4	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Psalms 89:29	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Psalms 89:35-36	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Psalms 132:11	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Psalms 132:17	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Isaiah 7:13-14	Matthew 1:1

The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Isaiah 9:7	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Jeremiah 23:5-6a	Luke 3:23-31
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Jeremiah 33:14-15	Luke 3:23-31
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Ezekiel 17:22-24	Luke 3:23-31
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Ezekiel 34:23-24	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of Zerubbabel.	Haggai 2:23	Luke 3:23-27

Fulfilment

John 13:13

"Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am."

John 12:45

" And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me."

Additional Fulfilment Examples: Matthew 1:1-17

Jeremiah 23:1-8 describes the future millennial reign of Jesus as King Messiah. In contrast to the wicked shepherds of Jeremiah's day (Kings Jehoahaz, Jehoiachim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah) and those throughout history that have lead the flock of Israel into sin, idolatry, and ultimately captivity, this King will be a good shepherd that rules with wisdom and justice. Whereas Israel's evil rulers have caused its people to be scattered, Jesus says in Matthew 15:24 "... I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Verse 4 says "And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them..."⁴ and in John 21:16-17 Jesus speaking to Peter (and all those who become His disciples by accepting Him as Lord) says, "Feed my sheep." The people will be completely regathered to Israel and live safely under the multitude of blessing that the Lord bestows

⁴These good shepherds are typified in post-Babylonian captivity leaders like Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and others but more fully realized in the saints that will rule with Jesus, King Messiah in the age to come.

upon them and the land. (Reference a similar description of Jeremiah 23:1-8 in Ezekiel Chapter 34).

Verse 5 describes the royal "Branch" from the line of David,⁵ He will be the good and righteous King who will rule out of Zion. In Luke 1:32-33 the angel that visited Mary before Jesus was born spoke of Jesus' destiny to reign on the throne of David, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Messiah is to be descendent of David, a continuation of God's promise that Nathan delivered to David in 2 Samuel 7:12-13. The phrase "... and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth," this will occur upon the second coming of Jesus when His enemies are made a footstool for His feet (Psalm 110:1), and on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:16).

Verse 6, "... The Lord our Righteousness," 1) The name "the Lord" speaks to this King's divinity, see Jeremiah 23:6, "The Messiah would be God." 2) The second part of the name "... our Righteousness," in John 10:11 Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." By giving His life for us to satisfy the judgment that we owed, we were justified and made righteous before God, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The Messiah would be both God and Man

Prophecy

Jeremiah 23:5-6c

"⁵ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. ⁶ In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell

⁵ Branch, a Messianic metaphor, literally meaning "shoot" or "sprout," and signifying the new life that Messiah brings to the Davidic monarchy that was presumed dead, and the new life that He brings to all mankind. Isaiah 4:2 speaks of the Branch of the Lord, Isaiah 11:1-5 describes the Spirit-filled Branch, Jeremiah 23:5 and 33:15 presents the Branch, the King from the royal line of David, Zechariah 3:8 outlines God's "Servant," the Branch, and Zechariah 6:12 offers the "Man" who is the Branch. David Baron in his classic book "Rays of Messiah's Glory" states that the Hebrew word translated in English as "Branch" in Jeremiah 23:5 means "son" in its literal and natural sense. He goes on to say that this is the verse most generally quoted by Jews as proof that the Messiah is to be the Son of David.

safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Similar prophecies

Subject	Prophecy	Fulfillment
The Messiah would be the creator of all.	Psalms 102:25-27b	John 1:3
The Messiah would be Lord.	Psalms 110:1a	Matthew 22:41-45
The Messiah would be holy.	Daniel 9:24b	Luke 1:35
The Messiah would be God.	Psalms 45:6-7b	Hebrews 1:8-9
The Messiah would be God.	Isaiah 7:14c	John 12:45
The Messiah would be God.	Isaiah 40:3c	John 10:30
The Messiah would be God.	Jeremiah 23:5-6b	John 13:13
The Messiah would be both God and man.	Jeremiah 23:5-6c	1 Timothy 3:16
The Messiah would be both God and man (the "Mighty God").	Isaiah 9:6d	John 10:30
The Messiah would be God	Zechariah 11:10-11b	John 14:7
The Messiah would be God	Zechariah 11:12-13d	John 12:45
The Messiah would be both God and man.	Zechariah 12:10b	John 10:30
The Messiah would be both God and man	Zechariah 13:7c	John 14:9

Fulfillment

1 Timothy 3:16

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

Colossians 2:9

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Additional Fulfilment Examples

Matthew 22:41-45, Mark 12:35-37, Luke 20:41-44, John 1:1-14, 8:58, 10:30, 10:38, 13:13, 12:45, 14:7-10, Romans 9:5, Philippians 2:5-7 Titus 2:13, Hebrews 1:3, 1:8-9, 2:14

Jeremiah 23:6 tells us that Messiah is to be God, and yet verse 5 states that he will be a human descendent of the line of David. This is reminiscent of Psalm 110:1, which Jesus referenced when he said to the Pharisees, "If David then calls him "Lord," how is he his son?" (Matthew 22:45).

The Messiah would born of a virgin.

Prophecy

Jeremiah 31:22

"How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? For the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man."

Subject	Prophecy	Fulfilment
The Messiah would be born of the "seed" of a woman.	Genesis 3:15a	Luke 1:34-35
The Messiah would be born of a virgin.	Isaiah 7:14a	Luke 1:34-35
The Messiah would be born of a virgin.	Jeremiah 31:22	Matthew 1:18-20
The Messiah would be Immanuel, "God with us."	Isaiah 7:14b	Matthew 1:21-23
The Messiah would be called by his name before he was born.	Isaiah 49:1c	Luke 1:30-31
The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.	Micah 5:2a	Matthew 2:1-2
The birth of the Messiah.	Isaiah 9:6a	Luke 2:11
The Messiah would be protected by God.	Isaiah 49:2b	Matthew 2:13-15
The Messiah would grow up in a poor family.	Isaiah 11:1b	Luke 2:7
The Messiah would grow up in a poor family.	Isaiah 53:2a	Luke 2:7
The Messiah would be aware of his Father from his youth.	Psalms 22:9	Luke 2:40

Fulfilment

Matthew 1:18-20

"¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. ¹⁹ Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. ²⁰ But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."

Additional Fulfilment Examples

Luke 1:34-35, John 1:14, Galatians 4:4

That a woman should "compass a man," was a "new," and from the Lord. The Hebrew word used here for "man" is "gerber," which means a champion, hero, warrior, mighty man. A form of this same word, "El Gibbor" meaning "the Mighty God," or "God the Champion" is used in Isaiah 9:6, which is a Messianic prophecy.

The Messiah would be the New Covenant

Prophecy

Jeremiah 31:31

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:"

Subject	Prophecy	Fulfilment
The Messiah would be the messenger of the new covenant.	Malachi 3:1c	Luke 4:43
The Messiah would be the new covenant.	Isaiah 42:6c	Matthew 26:28
The Messiah would be the new covenant.	Jeremiah 31:31	Matthew 26:28
The Messiah would come to make an end to sins.	Daniel 9:24a	Galatians 1:3-5
The Messiah would provide freedom from the bondage of sin and death.	Isaiah 61:1-2c	John 8:31-32
The Messiah would proclaim a period of grace.	Isaiah 61:1-2d	John 5:24
The Messiah would die for the sins of the	Isaiah 53:8d	1 John 2:2

world.		
The Messiah would die for the sins of the world.	Daniel 9:26b	Hebrews 2:9
The Messiah would give up his life to save mankind.	Isaiah 53:12b	Luke 23:46
The Messiah would be as a sacrificial lamb.	Isaiah 53:7c	John 1:29
The Messiah would be an offering for sin.	Isaiah 53:10b	Matthew 20:28
The Messiah's offering of himself would replace all sacrifices.	Psalms 40:6-8a	Hebrews 10:10-13
The Messiah's blood would be shed to make atonement for all.	Isaiah 52:15	Revelation 1:5
The Messiah would be the sin-bearer for all mankind.	Isaiah 53:6a	Galatians 1:4
The Messiah would be the sin-bearer for all mankind.	Isaiah 53:11d	Hebrews 9:28
The Messiah would be the sin-bearer for all mankind.	Isaiah 53:12d	2 Corinthians 5:21
The Messiah would bear and carry upon himself the sins of the world.	Isaiah 53:4b	1 Peter 2:24
The Messiah would bear the penalty for mankind's transgressions.	Isaiah 53:5a	Luke 23:33
The Messiah's sacrifice would provide peace between man and God.	Isaiah 53:5b	Colossians 1:20
The Messiah would justify man before God.	Isaiah 53:11c	Romans 5:8-9
The Messiah would be the intercessor between man and God.	Isaiah 59:15-16b	Matthew 10:32-33
The Messiah would intercede to God in behalf of mankind.	Isaiah 53:12e	Luke 23:34
The Messiah's atonement would enable believers to be his brethren.	Psalms 22:22	Hebrews 2:10-12
The Messiah would come to provide salvation.	Isaiah 59:15-16a	John 6:40
The Messiah would bring salvation.	Zachariah 9:9d	Luke 19:10
The Messiah would have a ministry to the "poor," the believing remnant.	Zachariah 11:7	Matthew 9:35-36
The Messiah would offer salvation to all	Joel 2:32	Romans 10:12-

mankind.		13
The Messiah would come to bring Israel back to God.	Isaiah 49:5b	Matthew 15:24
The Messiah would come to Zion as their Redeemer.	Isaiah 59:20	Luke 2:38
Those who refused to listen to the Messiah would be judged.	Deuteronomy 18:15-19c	John 12:48-50
The Messiah would reject those who did not believe in him.	Psalms 2:12b	John 3:36

Fulfilment

Matthew 26:28

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Additional Fulfilment Examples

Mark 14:24, Luke 22:20, Hebrews 8:8-13, 10:14-22, 12:24

The Messiah would be a descendant of David

Prophecy

Jeremiah 33:14-15

"¹⁴ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. ¹⁵ In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land."

Subject	Prophecy	Fulfillment
The Messiah would be a descendant of Shem.	Genesis 9:26	Luke 3:23-36
The Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham.	Genesis 12:3	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham.	Genesis 18:17-18a	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham.	Genesis 22:18a	Galatians 3:16

The Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Genesis 17:19	Luke 3:23-34
The Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Genesis 21:12	Luke 3:23-34
The Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Genesis 26:4	Luke 3:23-34
The Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob.	Genesis 28:14a	Luke 3:23-34
The Messiah would be a descendant of Judah.	Genesis 49:10a	Luke 3:23-33
The Messiah would be a descendant of Judah.	1 Chronicles 5:2	Luke 3:23-33
The Messiah would be a descendant of Boaz & Ruth.	Ruth 4:12-17	Luke 3:23-32
The Messiah would be a descendant of Jesse.	Isaiah 11:1a	Luke 3:23-32
The Messiah would be a descendant of Jesse.	Isaiah 11:10a	Luke 3:23-32
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	2 Samuel 7:12-13	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	2 Samuel 7:16	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	1 Chronicles 17:11-12a	Luke 3:23-31
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Psalms 89:3-4	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Psalms 89:29	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Psalms 89:35-36	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Psalms 132:11	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Psalms 132:17	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Isaiah 7:13-14	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Isaiah 9:7	Matthew 1:1

The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Jeremiah 23:5-6a	Luke 3:23-31
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Jeremiah 33:14-15	Luke 3:23-31
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Ezekiel 17:22-24	Luke 3:23-31
The Messiah would be a descendant of David.	Ezekiel 34:23-24	Matthew 1:1
The Messiah would be a descendant of Zerubbabel.	Haggai 2:23	Luke 3:23-27

Fulfilment

Luke 3:23-31

"Jesus... the son of David..."

Additional Fulfillment Examples

Matthew 1:1-17



Jews and Muslims visiting King David's Tomb

The Davidic Covenant in Jeremiah 33

Jeremiah's view of the Davidic Covenant

How did Jeremiah view the Davidic Covenant? We will see that his view was no different from that which was already revealed up to this point in time. The psalms and the prophet Isaiah have shown us that the Davidic Covenant would be fulfilled by one man, the Messiah, being born of the Davidic line who would rule from the throne of David in Jerusalem. This is how the terms of the Davidic line ruling forever would be brought to fruition by the LORD. Jeremiah saw the downfall of the line of David, yet in the midst of that darkness, he saw the light of the Messiah. Before looking at Jeremiah 33, we are going to look at one other important passage.

Jeremiah verses 22-23

Jeremiah 22-23 is pivotally placed in regards to the continuation of the line of David ruling from Jerusalem. First, let me point out that while Jeremiah 21 seems at first glance to be from the same time frame as 22-23, it is not. Jeremiah 21 is directed toward the one ruling from the throne of David, which at that time was Zedekiah. Jeremiah 22 is also directed toward the one ruling from the throne of David, but examining the rest of the chapter shows that Jehoiakim was presently ruling. The translators rightly placed the chapter division at the point where the prophecy chronologically shifted. As I've noted before, Jeremiah is not chronologically arranged, but thematically arranged. Both prophecies directed at the throne of David (21 and 22-23) are evidence in the divine court that God is justified in bringing correction against the line of David for their repeated sins. Remember that it is God Himself who must punish the line of David according to the terms of the Davidic Covenant.

In chapters 22-23, Jehoiakim is on the throne, Shallum (Jehoahaz) has just been taken into captivity but is not yet dead, and Jeconiah (Coniah) is being groomed to take the throne. God is pronouncing judgment upon all three. God pronounces that Shallum will not return, but will die in the place where he is. Jehoiakim will shortly be disposed of with not so much as a decent burial. Jeconiah will be carried captive to Babylon and die there. In addition to this, no son of Jeconiah will ever rule from the throne of David. That's a fairly complete way of removing the line of David from Jerusalem altogether. Yet Zedekiah ruled for 11 more years, which was not foreseen in this particular prophecy. Since these three prophecies were fulfilled so precisely, this alone should have validated Jeremiah's unction as being from the LORD. One other point of interest concerning Jeconiah is the mention of the signet ring. This was the symbol of

authority for the king in those days. With Jehoiakim currently on the throne, God states that even though Jeconiah would shortly be the signet ring on His right hand, God would tear him off and throw him away. In short, God's patience was completely exhausted with the line of David. No longer would the Davidic line represent His authority ruling from Jerusalem.

For a few minutes, focus on 22:3-4 and the promise contained therein. God is castigating the line of David, but it is with the hope that they will repent. If they repent, the fulfilment of the Davidic Covenant will come to fruition. Here the repentance is in the form of executing justice, something that the sons of Josiah had not done. The parallel passage to this is in Jeremiah 17:24-26. Like this passage, it is directed at the line of David, see 17:19-23. Here the repentance is in the form of observing the Sabbath which was God's covenant sign to the nation of Israel. The repentance of the line of David would result in the fulfilment of the Davidic Covenant. In this passage the promise of Jerusalem being inhabited forever is intertwined with the rule of the Davidic kings from the throne of David. God is giving the kings of Judah fair warning before proceeding with the disciplinary measures promised in II Samuel 7:14 and Psalm 89:30-32. Repent and you will reign from Jerusalem as God promised to David. Continue in wickedness and you will be through. I point out that human sinfulness stood in the way of the line of David fulfilling the mandate to repent. The only way these terms could be fulfilled is if the heart of the nation were circumcised according to the prediction in the Palestinian Covenant, Deuteronomy 30:6, also known as God writing His laws on their hearts according to the New Covenant, Jeremiah 31:33, or known as God giving them one heart according to the Everlasting Covenant, Jeremiah 32:39 and Ezekiel 11:19-20.

In spite of the fact that this passage is primarily about God's righteous judgment upon the Davidic line, God placed a word of hope in this prophecy. Jeremiah 23 continues the oracle by referring to the kings as shepherds. Remember that the kings of David were chosen to shepherd the nation of Israel. Not only were the kings of Israel sinning by performing wickedness, they were also sinning by omitting the acts of righteousness for which they were appointed.

Shepherding the nation of Israel was their chief duty at which they had utterly failed.

The word of hope comes in 23:5-8. Nothing in this prophecy is anything which had not been already revealed. The poignant position of the prophecy is what is to be noted. The kings in Jerusalem are about to be deposed as chapter 22 tells us. Yet the Messiah will still shoot forth from the line of David as Psalm 89 and

other prophecies in Isaiah had foretold. Since these shepherds had failed, God would set up the ultimate shepherd, the righteous Branch, the Messiah.

Jeremiah's entire prophecy is filled with doom and gloom. The nation of Israel will go into captivity. All nations in the entire region will come under the harsh yoke of Babylon. To top it off, the kings of David will not rule from Jerusalem any more. Yet there are days coming when a righteous king will rule. This Branch of David will execute justice, deal wisely, and perform righteousness, all the things that the sons of Josiah had not done. During the Messiah's reign, Judah will be delivered and the nation of Israel will dwell securely. He will be responsible for the second exodus of the people of Israel. Instead of leading them from bondage in Egypt, they will be re-gathered from all the nations of the earth into the promised land of rest. He will be called "The LORD is our righteousness," which means that the righteousness of His people will be vested in His very person. When you read the darkness of the prophecy in Jeremiah 22, it stands in stark contrast with the hope in Jeremiah 23:5-8. And that is exactly what we see in Jeremiah 33 as well.

The prophecy of the second exodus proves that there is a future reality in which the children of Israel will exist as a nation under the rule of the Messiah. The peace and security which exist during the days of the Messiah will be a future covenant arrangement for the nation of Israel. They will find their identity in the fact that God has re-gathered them from all nations. (The mention of "all nations" should help us to see past the Babylonian captivity which was a deportation to just one nation.) Just as the nation of Israel found their identity in the redemption from the land of Egypt in the past, so in the future, God's deliverance from all nations back into the promised land will demonstrate to the world who they are. "The LORD lives" is the oath which one would take to show one's faith in Him. The identity of the living God in those days will be that of the God who keeps His covenant promises to the nation of Israel.

Jeremiah chapter 33

Jeremiah 33 is set during the reign of Zedekiah. Jeremiah 32 was given almost at the end of Zedekiah's reign as Jerusalem was in the final siege. Jeremiah 33 states that this prophecy was given after Jeremiah 32 while he was still imprisoned. So now we are even closer to the time when Jerusalem will be broken up, Zedekiah blinded and carried captive, and the temple burned to the ground. Apparently, some of the king's personal houses had to be torn down in order to provide materials to temporarily fend off the siege. I'm sure the citizens of Jerusalem saw this as a sign of fear and weakness on the part of their Israelite leaders. Being in the prison, Jeremiah saw these things transpiring before him.

Yet in the face of the inevitable destruction of the city of Jerusalem, Jeremiah foretold that the city would one day be praiseworthy to the LORD, 33:6-9. At that time the guilt and sin of Israel will be gone. The rebellion against the LORD will be over. The city of Jerusalem will be glorious before all the nations of the earth.

As this prophecy begins, it is directed toward the nation of Israel as a whole. There are parallels here to the two previous oracles on the future of God's covenant plan. In 33:7, God promises to restore the fortunes of Israel which was previously foretold in 30:18. God also tells that He will cleanse His people from their sins, which also was mentioned when God revealed the nature of the New Covenant, 31:34. So this prophecy will occur at the same time that Israel enters into the New Covenant relationship with the LORD. Further on, God uses language that reflects Jeremiah 32 when He gave the oracle on the Everlasting Covenant. In 32:43 God drew the contrast between the present desolation and the future blessing. Now in 33:10 God does the exact same thing. The present desolation will not stop God's covenant plan for the nation of Israel from being fulfilled. The future blessing here is explained in terms of people living happily, singing to God, and bringing thanksgiving offerings to His temple. Then beginning in 33:14, God states that the days are coming when He will fulfill the promise He had made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, showing that both kingdoms will be united in the future. He then reveals the future of the Davidic Covenant. The Davidic Covenant was not simply a joy and blessing for those descendants of David, but for the nation of Israel as a whole. Think of the joy during the days of Joash to have the Davidic line restored to power, II Chronicles 23, the whole chapter.

As we have previously seen, the future of the city of Jerusalem is intertwined with the rule of the lineage of David. Here in this prophecy of the Davidic Messiah, there is no change in this peculiarity. Jerusalem will be restored, and in the same vein, the Davidic Messiah will rule, 33:14-16. The wording is almost identical to Jeremiah 23:5-6. One slight change is that instead of *Israel* dwelling securely, Jeremiah prophesies that Jerusalem will dwell securely. This shows that the Messiah will rule from Jerusalem keeping it secure. In spite of the coming destruction of Jerusalem, there will still come a righteous Branch from David sometime in the future and reign from a restored Jerusalem.

But there is something more in this section that cannot be overlooked. In addition to the continuation of the Davidic Covenant through the future reign of the Messiah, another facet of David's authority will continue. David had set up the temple worship in Jerusalem even before the temple was erected. The Chronicler goes to great lengths to show that David had organized the Levitical

priesthood when he established the temple worship, I Chronicles 23-26. When Israel returned from captivity, this temple worship was restored at Zerubbabel's temple, but it was clearly documented as being originally authorized by King David, Ezra 3:10, Nehemiah 12:24, 36, 45-46. So the continuation of the Davidic rule would naturally include the continuation of temple worship.

Here in Jeremiah 33:17-18 God foretells that as the Davidic rule will continue through the Messiah, that the priests will offer up sacrifices continually through the Levitical ministry, mentioning both in the same sentence. Another section of this oracle begins in verse 19 in which God expounds what He has just revealed. In language that is very similar to Jeremiah 31:35-36, God promises that His covenant with David cannot be broken. Remember how the original promise to David did not contain the word "covenant", but later Psalm 89 did; now we see another use of the phraseology of God's covenant with David. The peculiarities of future fulfilment of this covenant are that David will always have a son ruling on the throne, and that the Levites will always minister unto the LORD. As if to drive the point home even further, God speaks to Jeremiah again beginning in verse 23. He asks Jeremiah to consider the two families of which He has spoken. The two families that have been mentioned are that of the family of David and the family of Levi. So the family of David is intertwined with the family of Levi in the future fulfilment of God's promises for the Messiah to rule.

God compares His covenant with David to His covenant with the cycle of day and night. The idea of the diurnal order being unalterable makes me wonder about the possibility of day and night continuing perpetually. We shouldn't get too hung up on God's language here. Perhaps the time will come when day and night will cease and there will be only day. Perhaps God will allow this order to continue infinitely. The idea that God is conveying here is that the continuation of day and night is something that man cannot ever interfere with. This is set in God's plan such that no man (however powerful) could alter. So it is with the Davidic Covenant. No man will ever be able to alter God's plan for the Davidic Covenant to be fulfilled on God's terms. Let's not get hung up on whether or not day and night will one day come to an end thereby allowing God to be released from His faithfulness to the Davidic Covenant. This language was meant to convey God's unalterable purposes.

When God threw away the signet ring from His right hand, He still had in mind that He would fulfil the Davidic Covenant, just not through Jeconiah any longer. God threw away the signet ring when He removed Jeconiah from ruling in Jerusalem. Yet after the 70 years were fulfilled and Israel was allowed to return, God demonstrated His faithfulness to His covenant by prophesying through Haggai. When the remnant returned to Jerusalem, Zerubbabel returned with

them, who was grandson to Jeconiah. When Jehoahaz was deposed, Jehoiakim was ruling vicariously in his place until Jehoahaz died. Then after his death, Jehoiakim no longer ruled as regent, but as king. When Jeconiah was taken captive, Zedekiah was ruling as regent until he might return, Jeremiah 28:4. Jeconiah never returned, but he never died while Zedekiah ruled either. So when Zedekiah was taken captive to Babylon, the rightful heir to the throne was still Jeconiah, even though he only reigned for three months. Zerubbabel came to Jerusalem as the grandson of Jeconiah and heir to the throne of David. While he never took that throne, he served as governor over the city of Jerusalem. This was Haggai's post-exilic prophecy for Zerubbabel (Haggai 2: 21-23) (KJV 1611).

21: Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth;

22: And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.

23: In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.

The ring that God cast off from His finger in the days of Jeconiah, He put back on in the days of Zerubbabel. The kingly lineage would not rule from Jerusalem, but the days would come when that same authority promised to the Davidic line would overthrow the kingdoms of this world through the seed of Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel would be the signet ring on His right hand since He would bring forth the Messiah.

To sum up, Jeremiah saw the future of the Davidic Covenant as such. Even though the Davidic rule was coming to an end, God would be faithful to His promise and bring forth the Messiah from the line of David. This Messiah would rule as the Great Shepherd over the completely forgiven and cleansed nation of Israel after He re-gathers His people from all nations from which they had been scattered. In His days there would be peace and security for the nation of Israel and for Jerusalem which would be the place of His royal rule. The temple worship would continue during His reign as the priests continue to offer up sacrifices with the Levites as their ministers. The Messiah would execute justice and righteousness over His joyful people in the land during His rule.



Maranatha – Jesus Comes

Old Testament Scriptures That Describe The Coming Messiah

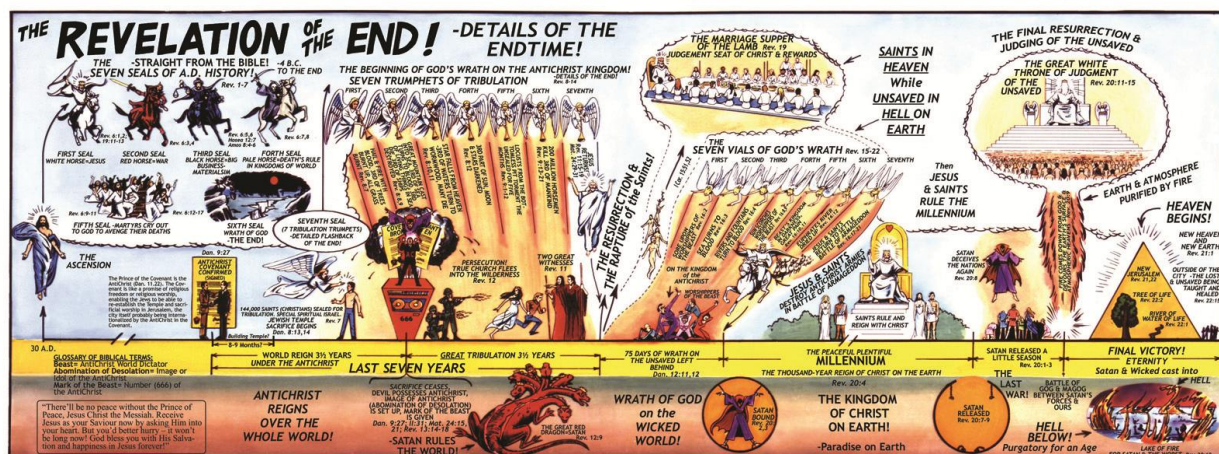
The Messianic Prophecy (paraphrased)	Where the prophecy appears in the Old Testament (written between 1450 BC and 430BC)	Jesus' fulfillment of the prophecy in the New Testament (written between 45 and 95 AD)
The Messiah will be the offspring (descendant) of the woman (Eve)	Genesis 3:15	Galatians 4:4
The Messiah will be a descendant of Abraham, through whom everyone on earth will be blessed	Genesis 12:3; 18:18	Acts 3:25,26
The Messiah will be a descendant of Judah	Genesis 49:10	Matthew 1:2 and Luke 3:33
The Messiah will be a prophet like	Deuteronomy 18:15-19	Acts 3:22-23

Moses

The Messiah will be the Son of God	Psalm 2:7	Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22
The Messiah will be raised from the dead (resurrected)	Psalm 16:10-11	Matthew 28:5-9; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:4-7; John 20:11-16; Acts 1:3 and Acts 2:32
The Messiah crucifixion experience	Psalm 22 (contains 11 prophecies—not all listed here)	Matthew 27:34-50 and John 19:17-30
The Messiah will be sneered at and mocked	Psalm 22:7	Luke 23:11, Luke 23:35-39
The Messiah will be pierced through hands and feet	Psalm 22:16	Luke 23:33 and Luke 24:36-39; John 19:18 and John 20:19-20, John 20:24-27
The Messiah's bones will not be broken (a person's legs were usually broken after being crucified to speed up their death)	Psalm 22:17 and Psalms 34:20	John 19:31-33, John 19:36
Men Will Gamble for the Messiah's clothing	Psalm 22:18	Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:23-24
The Messiah will be accused by false witnesses	Psalm 35:11	Matthew 26:59-60 and Mark 14:56-57
The Messiah will be hated without a cause	Psalm 35:19 and Psalms 69:4	John 15:23-25
The Messiah will be betrayed by a friend	Psalm 41:9	John 13:18-21
The Messiah will ascend to heaven (at the right hand of God)	Psalm 68:18	Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9; Acts 2:33-35; Acts 3:20-21; Acts 5:31-32; Acts 7:55-56; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20-21; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3; Heb. 8:1; Heb. 10:12; Heb. 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22 . . .
The Messiah will be given vinegar and gall to drink	Psalm 69:21	Matthew 27:34; Mark 15:23; John 19:29-30
Great kings will	Psalm 72:10-11	Matthew 2:1-11

pay homage and tribute to the Messiah		
The Messiah is a “stone the builders rejected” who will become the “head cornerstone”	Psalm 118:22-23 and Isaiah 28:16	Matthew 21:42-43; Acts 4:11; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-8
The Messiah will be a descendant of David	Psalm 132:11 and Jeremiah 23:5-6; Jere. 33:15-16	Luke 1:32-33
The Messiah will be a born of a virgin	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-35
The Messiah’s first spiritual work will be in Galilee	Isaiah 9:1-7	Matthew 4:12-16
The Messiah will make the blind see, the deaf hear, etc.	Isaiah 35:5-6	Many places. Also see Matthew 11:3-6 and John 11:47
The Messiah will be beaten, mocked, and spat upon	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67 and Matt. 27:26-31
The “Gospel according to Isaiah”	Isaiah 52:13 Isa. 53:12	Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
People will hear and not believe the “arm of the LORD” (Messiah)	Isaiah 53:1	John 12:37-38
The Messiah will be rejected	Isaiah 53:3	Matthew 27:20-25; Mark 15:8-14; Luke 23:18-23; John 19:14-15
The Messiah will be killed	Isaiah 53:5-9	Matthew 27:50; Mark 15:37-39; Luke 23:46; John 19:30
The Messiah will be silent in front of his accusers	Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 26:62,63 and 27:12-14
The Messiah will be buried with the rich	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:59-60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:52-53; John 19:38-42
The Messiah will be crucified with criminals	Isaiah 53:12	Matthew 27:38; Mark 15:27; Luke 23:32-33

The Messiah is part of the new and everlasting covenant	Isaiah 55:3-4 and Jeremiah 31:31-34	Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8:6-13
The Messiah will be our intercessor (intervene for us and plead on our behalf)	Isaiah 59:16	Hebrews 9:15
The Messiah has two missions	Isaiah 61:1-3 (first mission ends at "... year of the LORD's favour")	First mission: Luke 4:16-21; Second mission: to be fulfilled at the end of the world
The Messiah will come at a specific time	Daniel 9:25-26	Galatians 4:4 and Ephesians 1:10
The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1 and Luke 2:4-7
The Messiah will enter Jerusalem riding a donkey	Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:1-11
The Messiah will be sold for 30 pieces of silver	Zechariah 11:12-13	Matthew 26:15 with Matthew 27:3-10
The Messiah will forsaken by His disciples	Zechariah 13:7	Matthew 26:31, Matt. 26:56
The Messiah will enter the Temple with authority	Malachi 3:1	Malachi 4:1 and Luke 19:45



Revelation Book of Hope and Warning

Research and Study by Rev. Philippe L. De Coster, B.Th., D.D.

Last but not least, the book of Revelation is by far one of the most challenging books in the Bible, yet well worth the effort to study and comprehend. In fact, the opening passage contains a blessing to everyone who reads, hears and keeps the words of this prophecy:

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. (Revelation 1:3)

The unveiling comes to the Apostle John through a series of magnificent visions. The visions unfold like a vivid science fiction novel. The strange language, imagery, and symbolism in Revelation were not quite as foreign to first century Christians as they are to us today. The numbers, symbols and word pictures John used held political and religious significance to believers in Asia Minor because they were familiar with the Old Testament prophetic writings of Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel and other Jewish texts. Today, we need help deciphering these images.

To further complicate the book of Revelation, John saw visions of both his present world and of events yet to take place in the future. At times John witnessed multiple images and different perspectives of the same event. These visions were active, evolving, and challenging to the imagination.

Scholars assign four basic schools of interpretation to the book of Revelation. Here is a quick and simple explanation of those views:

Historicism interprets the writing as a prophetic and panoramic overview of history, from the first century until the Second Coming of Christ.

Futurism sees the visions (with the exception of chapters 1-3) as related to end times events still to come in the future.

Preterism treats the visions as dealing with past events alone, specifically events in the time John was living.

Idealism interprets Revelation as primarily symbolic, providing timeless and spiritual truth to encourage persecuted believers.

The author

The book of Revelation begins, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. (Revelation 1:1-2) So, the divine author of Revelation is Jesus Christ and the human author is the Apostle John.

Date Written:

John, exiled on the Island of Patmos by the Romans for his testimony about Jesus Christ and nearing the end of his life, wrote the book in approximately A.D. 95-96.

Written To:

The book of Revelation is addressed to believers, “his servants,” of the churches in seven cities of the Roman province of Asia. Those churches were in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodecea. The book is also written to all believers everywhere.

History around the Book of Revelation:

Off the coast of Asia in the Aegean Sea on the Island of Patmos, John wrote to the believers in the churches of Asia Minor (modern-day western Turkey). These congregations were standing strong, but facing temptations, the constant threat of false teachers and intense persecution under Emperor Domitian.

Doctrinal Themes around the Book of Revelation:

While this brief introduction is utterly insufficient to explore the complexities in the book of Revelation, it attempts to uncover the predominant messages within the book. Foremost is a glimpse into the invisible spiritual battle in which the body of Christ is engaged. Good battles against evil. God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, are pitted against Satan. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which

God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: 2: Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Satan and his demons. Indeed, our risen Savior and Lord has already won the war, but in the end he will come again to Earth. At that time everyone will know that he is King of Kings and Lord of the Universe. Ultimately, God and his people triumph over evil in a final victory.

God is sovereign. He controls the past, present and future. Believers can trust in his unfailing love and justice to keep them secure until the very end.

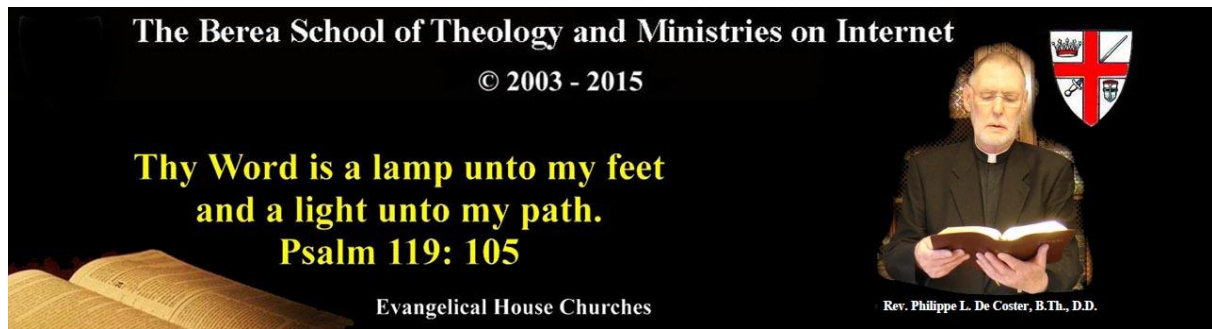
The Second Coming of Christ is a certain reality; therefore, God's children must remain faithful, confident and pure, resisting temptation.

Followers of Jesus Christ are cautioned to stay strong in the face of suffering, to uproot any sin that may be hindering their fellowship with God, and to live clean and undefiled by the influences of this world.

God hates sin and his final judgment will put an end to evil. Those who reject eternal life in Christ will face judgment and eternal punishment in hell.

Followers of Christ have great hope for the future. Our salvation is sure and our future is secure because our Lord Jesus conquered death and hell.

Christians are destined for eternity, where all things will be made new. Believer will live forever with God in perfect peace and security. His eternal kingdom will be established and he will rule and reign forever victorious.



The Statement of Faith of the Berea School of Theology and Ministries on Internet.

God and the Human Race.

We believe that the Lord our God is eternally one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and that he fulfils the sovereign purposes of his providence in creation, revelation, redemption, judgment, and the coming of his kingdom, calling out from the world of people, united to himself and to each other in love

We acknowledge that through God made humanity in his own likeness and image, conferring on us dignity and worth and enabling us to respond to himself, we are now members of a fallen race, who have sinned and come short of his glory.

We believe that the Father's holy love is shown supremely in that he gave Jesus Christ, his only Son, for us when, through our sinfulness and guilt, we were subject to his wrath and condemnation; and that his grace is shown supremely by his putting sinners right with himself when they place their trust in his Son.

We confess Jesus Christ as Lord and God, the eternal Son of the Father; as truly human, born of the virgin Mary; as Servant, sinless, full of grace and truth; as only Mediator and Saviour of the whole world, dying on the cross in our place, representing us to God, redeeming us from the grip, guilt and punishment of sin; as the Second Adam, the head of a new humanity, living a life of perfect obedience, overcoming death and decay, rising from the dead with a glorious body, being taken up to be with the Father, one day returning personally in glory and judgment to bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal death to the lost, to establish a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness, where there will be no more evil, suffering or death; as Victor over Satan and all his forces, rescuing us from the dominion of darkness, and bringing us into his own kingdom; as the Word who makes God known.

We believe in the Holy Spirit who with the Father and the Son is worthy of our worship, who convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness and judgment, who makes the death of Christ effective to sinners, enabling them to turn to God in repentance and directing their trust towards the Lord Jesus Christ; who through the new birth unites us with Christ, who is present within all believers; and makes us partake in Christ's risen life, pointing us to Jesus, freeing us from slavery to sin, producing in us his fruit, granting to us his gifts, and empowering us for service in the world.

The Holy Scriptures

We believe that the Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures are God-breathed since their writers spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; hence, they are fully trustworthy in all that they affirm; and as the written Word of God they are our supreme authority for faith and conduct.

We acknowledge the need for the Scriptures to be rightly interpreted under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and using the gifts of understanding and scholarship that God has given to his people.

The Church and its Mission

We recognise the Church as the body of Christ, of which he is the head, held together and growing up in him through the one Spirit; both as a total fellowship throughout the world, and as local congregations in which believers gather to worship God, growing in grace through Word, prayer and sacrament.

We acknowledge the commission of Christ to proclaim the Good News to all people making them disciples, baptising them, and teaching them to obey him.

We acknowledge the command of Christ to love our neighbours, resulting in service to the Church and to society, in seeking reconciliation for all with God and their fellows, in proclaiming liberty from every kind of oppression; and in spreading Christ's justice in an unjust world.

... until he comes again

Key Characters in the Book of Revelation:

Jesus Christ, the Apostle John.

Key Verses:

Revelation 1:17-19

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.

Revelation 7:9-12

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 21:1-4

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

Outline of the Book of Revelation:

- Salutation and Introduction - Revelation 1:1—20.
- Letters to the Seven Churches - Revelation 2:1—3:22.
- Visions of the End of the Age and the New Heaven and Earth - Revelation 4:1—22:5.
- Conclusion and Benediction- Revelation 22:6—21.

The Message of the Book of Revelation part of the Johnnic Writings

Who did Christ convey or dictate this disclosure to, with the charge of relaying it to Christ's servants? “

And he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.(Revelation 1:1). Christ is also called “*the Word*” of God (John 1:1); that is, He speaks not only on His own behalf, but on behalf of God the Father. The word “angel” in Revelation 1:1 is translated from the Greek word *aggelos*, which means “messenger” and can mean either a spirit or human messenger. In this case, it refers to a spirit being. As the last chapter further explains: “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star” (Revelation 22:16).

This revelation was “signified”—declared or made known—to the apostle John, as Christ's human agent responsible for transmitting it to Christ's servants on earth. It was about A.D. 94 or 95 when John received this revelation while on the island of Patmos (Revelation 1:9).

To whom did John initially deliver Christ's revelation?

“John, to the *seven churches which are in Asia*” (Revelation 1:4). Christ then told John, “What you see, write in a book and send it to *the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea*” (Revelation 1:11).

These seven cities were all on a mail route in the first century, and there was a congregation of God's Church in each city. However, at the time there were congregations of God's Church in many *other* cities as well, so apparently these seven were chosen to represent *all* of Christ's servants and congregations. We then see that in chapters 2 and 3, *prior* to the beginning of the actual revelation of end-time events, Christ has a personalized message for each of these seven congregations.

The history of God's Church through the centuries is a fascinating story; but to condense what we see in these two chapters, Christ chose each successive congregation (as it fell in order on the mail route) for its unique characteristics that would also be the predominant characteristic of His whole Church at a particular period in time. These periods of time, or eras, began with the characteristics of Ephesus in the first century and continue through the characteristics of Laodicea in the end time, prior to Christ's return.



An additional concept to understand about these seven churches is that the problems the members of each congregation faced are similar to the problems Church members would face throughout history. Christ plainly tells each congregation, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Revelation 2:7). No matter what the age, God’s people must listen to and obey His instructions as found in each of the admonitions to the churches.

The Seven Churches Altogether

As the first chapter of the book of Revelation explains, the apostle John was given a vision of end-time events leading up to the return of Jesus Christ. Part of the instruction that John received was: “What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea” (verse 11). The order of these cities corresponds to “the route along which a courier from Patmos [where John received the vision] would have carried the scroll” (Revelation 2:11).

Trying to understand what these messages mean for Christians today has been puzzling. These seven churches, named by their locations, were not the sum total of all the congregations of the Church of God in the first century. Additional congregations were located at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:2), Philippi (Philippians 1:1) and Colosse (Colossians 1:2), just to name a few of the additional cities where churches of God existed in the New Testament.

So why did God the Father, the author of this message (Revelation 1:1), select these seven congregations? What relevance do these messages have for us today? As we will see, God selected these seven congregations to give timeless instruction for His people throughout the centuries.

Because this instruction is both historical and prophetic—John was told to write about “the things which *are*, and the things which *will take place after this*” (verse 19, emphasis added)—this information must be understood from more than one perspective. Here are three ways this section of Scripture can be understood.

Instruction for the first-century seven churches

The seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3 were congregations of the Church of God in the first century. Located in Asia Minor (now modern Turkey), these churches represented actual communities of early Christians—not buildings or meeting halls.

In addressing each of these congregations, God said that He knew their works. Knowing the challenges they were facing and how they were responding, He admonished them to repent of their mistakes and to remain faithful in order to receive salvation. Although their circumstances varied, this message was similar for each church.

In closer examination of these messages, it is interesting to note that God clearly understood the difficulties and influences that the members of the congregation in each city had to endure and resist. For example, He knew that the members at Ephesus had lost their “first love” and that they were resisting the negative influence of the Nicolaitans (Revelation 2:4, 6). God also knew the “tribulation, and poverty” those in Smyrna were facing (verse 9).

One important lesson from Revelation 2 and 3 is that God knew the issues facing the churches and members of the first century. Similar to Paul’s letters to various congregations in other cities, these short messages to the seven congregations were intended to encourage the members in these cities to hold fast to God’s way of life so they could be rewarded in the future.

Progressive history of the Church

Students of the Bible have also noted that the messages to the seven churches imply a progressive history of things “which will take place after this” (Revelation 1:19). Some have described this as the chronological development of the Church or church eras.

Addressing this perspective: “Many expositors believe that in addition to the obvious implication of these messages the seven churches represent the chronological development of church history viewed spiritually. They note that

Ephesus seems to be characteristic of the Apostolic Period in general and that the progression of evil climaxing in Laodicea seems to indicate the final state of apostasy of the church. ... The order of the messages to the churches seems to be divinely selected to give prophetically the main movement of church history.”

Another scholar, C.I. Scofield (1843-1921), editor of the *Scofield Study Bible*, gives a similar explanation:

“Again, these messages by their very terms go beyond the local assemblies mentioned. It can be seen that Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7), though a local church in the apostle’s day, is typical of the first century as a whole; Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11) characterizes the church under persecution, e.g. from A.D. c. 100-316; Pergamos (Revelation 2:12-17), ‘where Satan dwells’ ... is suggestive of the church mixing with the world, e.g. in the Middle Ages; Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29) reveals how evil progresses in the church and idolatry is practiced; Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6) is representative of the church as dead, yet still having a minority of godly men and women, as during the Reformation; Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13) shows revival and a state of spiritual advance; and Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-19) is illustrative of the final state of apostasy which the visible church will experience” (*Scofield Study Bible*, Revelation 1:20).

While the Bible does not give us specific dates for the time periods or eras of the Church’s development and many of these periods of time overlap, there are indications of this historical progression within these messages to the churches. Here are a few of these apparent indications of the Church’s developing history: Ephesus, the first church mentioned in the messages to the seven churches of Revelation, served as the centre for John’s ministry at the end of the first century. The island of Patmos, where John received the vision recorded in the book of Revelation, was only 50 miles from Ephesus. It is well-known that John preached about love—some refer to him as the apostle of love—to help Christians at that time recapture their “first love” (Revelation 2:4; 1 John 3:10-11, 14, 16-18, 23).

Smyrna, the second church mentioned, was told that it would “have tribulation ten days” (Revelation 2:10). Commenting on this verse, Adam Clarke states: “As the days in this book are what is commonly called prophetic days, each answering to a year, the ten years of tribulation may denote ten years of persecution; and this was precisely the duration of the persecution under Diocletian, during which all the Asiatic Churches were grievously afflicted.

Others understand the expression as implying frequency and abundance, as it does in other parts of Scripture” (*Adam Clarke Commentary*, Revelation 2:10). Regardless of the exact meaning of “ten days” in Revelation 2:10, history shows that the Church of God faced great persecution in its earliest centuries. As shown, this is implied in the message to Smyrna and is also included in the third message (to Pergamos), in which God refers to “Antipas ... My faithful martyr” (Revelation 2:13).

The messages to the last four churches speak of Christ’s return—an indication that at least a remnant of Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia will still exist, along with Laodicea, in the end time (Revelation 2:25; Revelation 3:3, 11, 20). Indicating that the progression of history prior to Christ’s return has nearly run its course, Philadelphia is promised protection during “the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth” (Revelation 3:10).

How is the book of Revelation laid out?

Is there any logic or pattern to its contents, chapter by chapter, that we can see in outline form? Yes! In fact, seeing the main subjects laid out in outline form can help us grasp the big picture being disclosed by Christ in the book and help us understand the contents better as they fall within these main subjects. Although there are occasional sections providing supplemental information in a broader, historical perspective, in general, the information is presented in chronological order.

The book begins with Christ’s messages to the seven churches (chapters 1-3). Next, we notice a scroll being presented to Christ in heaven (chapters 4-5). This scroll is sealed with seven seals (Revelation 5:1) and contains the details of what will happen before and after Christ’s return. We see that Christ Himself is the only One qualified to open the seals of the scroll, revealing its contents.

Think of a continuous roll of writing paper with a strong adhesive seal preventing you from unrolling the paper. If you open the seal, you find writing on the paper and you can unroll and read it until you hit a second seal. Of course, the first seal is still open when you open the second seal. This is an important key to understanding the book. The seals are consecutive in time order; and once a seal is opened, it *remains* open to the very end!

What are these seven seals on the scroll about?

They reveal details of major events leading up to the return of Jesus Christ and even after. In brief, the first six include four symbolic horses (sometimes called “the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse”), great tribulation and heavenly signs. Although the fulfilment of the first four of these seals has been ongoing since the time of Christ, they will intensify prior to Christ’s return. The great tribulation and heavenly signs are yet to occur. To help you visualize how the contents of the book, including the seven seals, seven trumpets and seven plagues, are presented by Christ, see the chart below.

The book of Revelation speaks of seven seals being opened prior to the return of Jesus Christ to earth. What are the meanings of these seals?

The fifth chapter of the book of Revelation shows a scroll being presented to Christ in heaven. This scroll has seven seals, indicating things that will occur before and during Christ’s second coming.

This section of Scripture pictures Jesus being honoured as the One worthy to open these seals. While this event clearly occurs prior to the opening of the seals, other events in this chapter seem to be more of an overview of events, including things that will happen later. For example, Revelation 5:9-10 speaks of redeemed humans, who will be kings and priests on earth; and verse 13 speaks of “every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea” praising God the Father and the Lamb.

Instead of indicating a rapture of the saints prior to the opening of the seals, these verses show what will happen after the seals have been opened and the plan of God fulfilled. After giving this overview, chapter 6 and successive chapters explain with greater detail how this will occur—how there will eventually be only righteous people remaining, people who will certainly praise God.

Reflecting the end result of God’s plan, we note that when the “new heaven” and “new earth” are presented (Revelation 21:1), only faithful overcomers will remain. “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (verses 7-8).

Following this is the time when “every creature,” as spoken of in Revelation 5:13, will praise God the Father and Jesus. For more information on the saints at Christ’s return, see “Rapture: Will There Be a Secret Rapture?”



The four horsemen of the Apocalypse

Because the first four of the seals and their meaning for earth’s inhabitants are presented metaphorically as messengers riding different-colored horses, they are commonly referred to as the four horsemen of the Apocalypse. The word *apocalypse* comes from the Greek word *apokalupsis*, meaning “disclosure” or “revelation.” So the phrase “the four horsemen of the Apocalypse” means the four horsemen of the book of Revelation.

Since the meanings of the first four seals are the basis of the article “The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse,” we will just briefly cover these first four seals before focusing more extensively on the latter three.

First seal—a white horse

As the first seal was opened, the apostle John wrote: “And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer” (Revelation 6:2).

Comparing the seals to the events Christ said would happen in His famous Olivet prophecy, this seal represents religious deception (see Matthew 24:5).

Second seal—a red horse

When the second seal opened, John noted: “Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword” (Revelation 6:4).

This parallels Christ’s explanation that people would “hear of wars and rumours of wars” and that “nation will rise against nation” (Matthew 24:6-7).

Third seal—a black horse

As for the third seal, John said, “So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, ‘A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine’” (Revelation 6:5-6).

This was a graphic depiction of Christ’s teaching that “there will be famines” prior to His return (Matthew 24:7).

Fourth seal—a pale horse

Describing the fourth horse, John penned: “So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth” (Revelation 6:8).

This description pictures the “pestilences” Jesus said would come to earth’s inhabitants prior to His return (Matthew 24:7).

The events pictured by the first four seals—religious deception, war, famine and pestilences—have already been occurring. Listed as signs of Christ’s second coming and “the beginning of sorrows” (Matthew 24:8), these frightening events will intensify at the time of the end.

Fifth seal—tribulation

“When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed” (Revelation 6:9-11).

Context

Before focusing on the meaning of this seal, let’s consider the context of this vision. Because John is seeing faithful martyrs down through the ages and asking God how long it will be before their wrongful deaths are avenged, some have mistakenly assumed that this means these saints are alive in heaven waiting for God to judge those who killed them. We have to remember that this is a vision—not necessarily reality—to illustrate what is going to happen.

Sometimes the Bible uses metaphors to symbolize events past, present or future. These metaphors are not to be understood literally. A familiar use of a metaphor is found in the book of Genesis where after Cain killed his brother, Abel, God said to Cain, “The voice of your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground” (Genesis 4:10). The blood was figuratively crying out.

The vision of the fifth seal, in which faithful martyrs through the ages are waiting for God to judge the world, symbolizes God’s purpose for this present earth and humanity, which is to bring “many sons to glory” (Hebrews 2:10). Paul metaphorically described this process saying, “For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now” (Romans 8:22). We need to remember that the purpose of the book of Revelation and its seals is to show what will happen in the future and that God’s plan of salvation will be fulfilled.

Meaning

The vision John was seeing to represent the fifth seal was that of the Great Tribulation that will be directed against the physical descendants of Jacob and God’s faithful people before Christ returns.

Describing this time, Jesus said, “Then they will deliver you up to *tribulation* and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another” (Matthew 24:9-10, emphasis added throughout).

Continuing to describe this time of unprecedented trial, Jesus said, “For then shall be *great tribulation*, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved [alive]; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” (verses 21-22).

This seal represents Satan’s anger, which will be directed against mankind and especially against God’s people. Warning people of these end-time actions by Satan, Revelation 12:12 says, “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”

Sixth seal - cosmic disturbances

Describing what he saw when this seal opened, John wrote: “And behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place” (Revelation 6:12-14)

These supernatural events had long before been foretold as signs of the day of the Lord, the time of Christ’s return to earth. The prophet Joel had described this as “a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness” and a time when “the sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness. ... The heavens and earth will shake” (Joel 2:2; Joel 3:15-16).

As these awesome events transpire, mankind will realize that God will soon bring punishment upon earth’s inhabitants because of disobedience to His laws. “And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’” (Revelation 6:15-17).

The seventh seal - the wrath and mercy of God

The seventh seal, which includes seven trumpets, begins in Revelation 8. This seal, which is also called the Day of the Lord, is the predominant theme of the book of Revelation. It represents both “the wrath of the Lamb” (Revelation 6:16), which Christ will bring upon mankind because of disobedience to God’s laws, and the mercy of God, which will eventually come through the return of Jesus Christ to this earth to establish the Kingdom of God.

Prior to the beginning of the seventh seal, God is going to seal a group of 144,000 people, representing the 12 tribes of Israel, and a great multitude (Revelation 7:3-4, 9).

The Greek word *sphragizo*, translated “sealed,” has the meaning of stamping or marking for security. This same word is used by Paul in Ephesians 1:13 to describe Christians who were “sealed with that holy Spirit of promise” and in Ephesians 4:30 to describe Christians who were “sealed for the day of redemption.” God’s faithful people are thus going to be protected from the punishments soon to come upon the rest of mankind, people who are in rebellion against God.

As the seventh seal begins, seven trumpets, representing a series of punishments, prepare to sound (Revelation 8:6). By the time of the fifth trumpet, the punishment will be so severe that “men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them” (Revelation 9:6). During the sixth trumpet, a third of mankind will be killed (verse 18).

For a more detailed explanation of why God is angry with humans, see the article “Wrath of God.”

The mercy of God soon follows when the seventh trumpet sounds to announce that “the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ” (Revelation 11:15).

Although there will still be “seven last plagues,” also called “bowls full of the wrath of God,” until “the wrath of God is complete” (Revelation 15:1 and 7), events on earth are now destined to improve. When Christ returns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Kingdom of God will be established and 1,000 years of peace and prosperity will begin.

Is there a major theme to the Book of Revelation?

Yes, there is. In fact, we can see it by looking at the outline of the book. Notice that the first six seals are all opened in chapter 6. Then notice that the seventh seal, comprising seven trumpets, begins to be opened in chapter 8, and continues until the end of the book! So, the seventh seal is the predominant theme of the book. (For an explanation on the first four seals, see “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.”)

The Four Horsemen (more detail)

First of all, “Apocalypse” is actually a reference to the book of Revelation (the last book of the Bible). The Greek word for “disclosure” or “revelation” is *apokalupsis*, spelled *apocalypse* in English. Because this term has taken on a modern popular meaning beyond its original definition, Revelation is used instead for the name of the book. So the four horsemen of the Apocalypse are actually the four horsemen of Revelation.

First four of seven seals

The four horsemen appear only in Revelation chapter 6. Some additional context is needed to understand their identity and meaning. This book is Jesus Christ’s revelation to His servants (Revelation 1:1), showing major events that will take place prior to His return to the earth. These events are written under seven distinct seals of a single scroll, which only Christ Himself can open to reveal their contents (see Revelation 5).

The first six seals are all opened in Revelation 6. The seventh seal is opened in chapter 8 and continues to the end of the book. The seventh seal represents the Day of the Lord and is actually the main theme of the book. The Day of the Lord is the time of Christ’s intervention in this world to wrest control from Satan’s dominion and from the rebellious human rulers under him and to establish the Kingdom of God here on earth. So the first six seals are all preliminary events that will lead up to the Day of the Lord.

With this context in mind, we now look at Revelation 6 where we find six seals disclosing events that will lead up to the end of this world. The first four seals are also the four horsemen of the Apocalypse. These horsemen represent events that have been ongoing since this prophecy was given and that will intensify before the end-time, climactic return of Jesus Christ.

Christ opens the seals

Since Christ is the One opening these seals and revealing what will happen in this world prior to His return, is there anywhere else in the Bible that He discloses these events? In fact, He did so shortly before His death in a section known as the Olivet Prophecy (given on the Mount of Olives), recorded in the Gospels of Matthew (chapter 24), Mark (chapter 13) and Luke (chapter 21). Seeing what Christ said in this prophecy helps us identify what each of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse represents.

In Matthew 24:3 Christ's disciples asked, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" In the comparison chart below, notice how Christ's answer lines up exactly with what He gave years later in the book of Revelation through the apostle John.

An important point to realize is that once each seal is opened, it *remains open!* In other words, each seal is *added* to the seals previously opened and taking their toll, and they all greatly intensify as the end of this world draws near.

Notice the enormous effect of these first four seals (horsemen) in Revelation 6:8: "And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth." This indicates that the first four seals will ultimately result in a death toll of one-fourth the earth's population. This summary statement also adds something else that will contribute to the death toll—beasts of the earth, which kill as carriers of pestilence and as ravenous predators.

The first four seals are clearly already open in our day now, and the four horsemen of the Apocalypse have been riding through the years, taking their toll on populations. But many other prophecies in the Bible show that their destruction will multiply greatly as the next seal—the fifth seal or Great Tribulation—is about to open. Christ reveals that this world is about to undergo great devastation due to the rebellion of humanity against our Creator.

Matthew 24	Revelation 6	Identity - Comment
24:5 “For many will come in My name , saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. ”	6:2 White horse and rider with a bow.	Religious deception would be the first major trend to develop after Christ’s departure from earth—i.e., falsely representing Christ, which would deceive many. (In Revelation 19:11-15 we see Christ on a white horse, but with a sword, not a bow.)
24:6 “And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. ... But the end is not yet. 24:7a “For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ”	6:3-4 Red horse and rider with a sword, taking peace from the earth and causing people to kill one another.	Wars have continued around the world since Christ left the earth. But warfare between great nations and kingdoms (including “world wars,” which began in the 20th century) will increase in the end time.
24:7b “And there will be famines , ...”	6:5-6 Black horse and rider with scales to weigh scarce food supplies.	Famines will increase around the world as the end draws near. Famines are caused by both droughts and wars.
24:7c “... pestilences , ...”	6:7-8 Pale horse (literally <i>chloros</i> , a pale green color) and rider named “Death.”	Pestilence (disease on a large scale, i.e., epidemics and pandemics) increases around the world. Wars and famines contribute to pestilence.

The seventh seal is also known as “**The Day of the Lord.**” We can see that the events within this seal are mirrored in other prophecies recorded in Isaiah 2:12; Isaiah 13:6, 9; Ezekiel 30:3; Joel 1:15; Joel 2:1, 11, 31; Obadiah 1:15; Zephaniah 1:7-8, 14; Zechariah 14:1; Acts 2:20; and 2 Peter 3:10.

Also, John says in his introductory comments that he was “in the Spirit on *the Lord’s Day*” (Revelation 1:10). “In the spirit” means in spirit (nonhuman) visions from Christ, through which He relayed this information to John. “On the Lord’s Day” is better translated (from the original Greek words) as “in [or into] the Lord’s Day.”

By seeing the predominant subject matter of the book - the seventh seal, also known as “the Day of the Lord”—we know that “the Lord’s Day” in Revelation 1:10 is simply another way of phrasing “the Day of the Lord.” In either form, it

is important to realize that mankind has had *his* “day”—going his own way, apart from God—for thousands of years now. And God has stood back and permitted man to build his own civilizations and do as he pleases on this earth, largely without intervening.

But the day is coming when God will begin to intervene on a global scale in order to begin ruling over this earth and to establish *His* Kingdom upon it. It will then be *His* (the Lord’s) day and no longer *man*’s day to do as he pleases.

And so we see that *God*’s day—“the Lord’s Day”—will begin after the sixth seal concludes. God will be intimately involved *from then on*, all the way through to Christ’s return to this earth and His rule upon the earth for 1,000 years (the “Millennium,” Revelation 20:4, 6) and then through the Great White Throne Judgment period (Revelation 20:11-15), the arrival of the New Jerusalem upon the earth (Revelation 21) and beyond!

What are the seven trumpets of Revelation?

As we see in the outline and chronological flow of the book, the seven trumpets are *within* the seventh seal. Again, the seventh seal is also called the “Day of the Lord,” which will begin with Christ gradually taking control of the earth.

The seven trumpets are actually phases of plagues and warfare, during which Christ progressively administers judgments upon stubborn and rebellious mankind. But even after punishment, there will be a pattern of refusal to repent.

“But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent” (Revelation 9:20).

And so God punishes more severely, with more plagues.

“And they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory” (Revelation 16:9). Again, God administers punishment and again mankind refuses to repent. “And they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds” (verse 11).

Seven Trumpets Purpose

The purpose of the seven trumpets is to wake up everyone in the world.

All around us are signs that the second coming of Jesus is near. But before He comes again the “gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world”. Matthew 24:14.

The problem is, the percentage of people on earth who have heard about Jesus and the gospel of His kingdom, is declining. If the current trend continues Jesus will never come again.

God has designed a method to get the attention of each person on earth so that he can hear a clear presentation of the gospel. Then each person will choose whether to worship Jesus or Satan. After the last person has made his final decision then probation will close and Jesus will come the second time.

Many people are too busy to take time to listen to the gospel. Most people are steeped in religion and tradition. Their mindset prevents them from hearing the gospel. Very soon God will interrupt the lives of people on earth and challenge their paradigms. Their minds will be opened. Taking time to hear the everlasting gospel will become a priority.

God will gain the attention of each person by sending great calamities on the earth. These calamities will occur during the seven trumpets found in the book of Revelation.

Worldwide earthquake

Shortly before the seven trumpets sound the people on earth will be shaken awake by a worldwide earthquake. It will be different than any previous earthquake because it will be felt all around the world. It will be accompanied by noises, thunder and lightning. This earthquake marks the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

Within a few weeks after the first worldwide earthquake the first four trumpets will sound in quick succession:

First Trumpet

Hail and fire will be thrown to the earth. Fires will be ignited all around the world and 1/3 of the trees and forests will be burned up. All the green fields,

crops and grass will be burned up. This devastation may be caused by meteors that rain down on earth. Volcanoes may begin erupting.

Second Trumpet

Something like a great mountain burning with fire is thrown into the sea. 1/3 of the sea will become like blood and 1/3 of the creatures in the sea will die. 1/3 of the ships on the sea will be destroyed. This will include cruise ships, freight ships, fishing boats and pleasure boats. This great mountain may be an asteroid that bursts into flame as it plummets through the earth's atmosphere. It then plunges into the ocean at the speed of 50,000 miles per hour.

Third Trumpet

A giant star drops from the sky, blazing like a torch. It falls on 1/3 of the rivers and on the springs of water. 1/3 of the fresh water on earth becomes bitter. Many people drink the poisoned water and die. This giant star may be another asteroid.

Fourth Trumpet

1/3 of the sun, moon and stars are darkened. Both the day and the night are affected. The smoke and eject from the first three trumpets will darken the air and the sky.

The first four trumpets will destroy buildings, roads, and bridges. Communication and transportation systems will be badly crippled. Our food crops will be destroyed and clean water will be scarce.

People will be terrified and will be asking if God is angry with us. Their minds have been opened to hear the gospel of the kingdom. They will have a desire to know more about God and to be saved from the destruction ravaging the world. As horrible as the first four trumpets are, they are nothing compared to trumpets 5, 6 and 7. The last three trumpets are called woes because their devastation is so overwhelming.

Fifth Trumpet - First woe

Satan and his millions of demons will appear visibly on earth. Satan will appear to be Jesus. Most of his millions of demons will appear to be angels from heaven. Others will appear as people who have died and supposedly gone to heaven. Satan (appearing as Jesus) will claim that he sent the earthquake and the calamities of the first four trumpets so that people will repent and worship him.

For five months he and his demons will inflict pain on people who refuse to worship him. He will offer to remove the pain if they will consent to worship him. He is not allowed to hurt those who have the seal of God on their foreheads.

Sixth Trumpet - Second woe

Satan and his demons will combine forces with an army of 200,000,000 people. Together they will kill 1/3 of the people on earth. Billions of people will be slaughtered. This will be the last opportunity for Satan to convince people to worship him and he will stop at nothing to achieve his objective.

Seventh Trumpet - Third woe

There is a second worldwide earthquake. It is accompanied by noises, thunder and lightning. There is also a great hailstorm. The kingdom of this world is given to Jesus and He will reign as King of kings forever. The door of mercy in heaven is shut. Human probation ends. People can no longer be converted to Jesus and choose to serve Him. Every person will continue to worship the master he has chosen, either Jesus or Satan.

Just before the first trumpet sounds, 144,000 servants of God will be sealed. During the first six trumpets they will give a clear, powerful presentation of the gospel to the whole world. Jesus will be revealed as a complete Savior. The 144,000 will present the everlasting gospel under the power of the Holy Spirit. During the chaos and destruction of the trumpets the earth will be lightened with the glory of the God of heaven.

What are the seven plagues of Revelation?

These are within the seventh trumpet. Again, see the chart below.

What does Christ intend we *do* with this information He has revealed?

“Behold, I am coming quickly! *Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book*” (Revelation 22:7).

The instructions Christ gave in His letters to the seven churches, as well as in the rest of the book, contain sobering reminders to remain loyal and obedient to God no matter the pressure to the contrary (even “until death,” Revelation 2:10; Revelation 12:11), to *overcome* (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; Revelation 3:5, 12, 21; Revelation 21:7), to *repent* (of sinning by breaking God’s laws, Revelation

2:5, 16; Revelation 3:3, 19), to *keep the commandments of God* (Revelation 12:17; Revelation 14:12; Revelation 22:14), to withdraw from the ungodly ways of the world (typified by “Babylon,” Revelation 18:4-5) and to never compromise with obedience and loyalty to God (Revelation 20:4).

In other words, one reason Christ reveals to His servants what will happen prior to His return to set up *God’s Kingdom* is to remind them of what they need to do *in order to be allowed in!*

Advice for churches, communities, fellowships, house churches

Progressive history of the Church

Students of the Bible have also noted that the messages to the seven churches imply a progressive history of things “which will take place after this” (Revelation 1:19). Some have described this as the chronological development of the Church or church eras.

“Many expositors believe that in addition to the obvious implication of these messages the seven churches represent the chronological development of church history viewed spiritually. They note that Ephesus seems to be characteristic of the Apostolic Period in general and that the progression of evil climaxing in Laodicea seems to indicate the final state of apostasy of the church. ... The order of the messages to the churches seems to be divinely selected to give prophetically the main movement of church history.

C.I. Scofield (1843-1921), editor of the *Scofield Study Bible*, gives a similar explanation:

“Again, these messages by their very terms go beyond the local assemblies mentioned. It can be seen that Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7), though a local church in the apostle’s day, is typical of the first century as a whole; Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11) characterizes the church under persecution, e.g. from A.D. c. 100-316; Pergamos (Revelation 2:12-17), ‘where Satan dwells’ ... is suggestive of the church mixing with the world, e.g. in the Middle Ages; Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29) reveals how evil progresses in the church and idolatry is practiced; Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6) is representative of the church as dead, yet still having a minority of godly men and women, as during the Reformation; Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13) shows revival and a state of spiritual advance; and Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-19) is illustrative of the final state of apostasy

which the visible church will experience” (*Scofield Study Bible*, Revelation 1:20).

While the Bible does not give us specific dates for the time periods or eras of the Church’s development and many of these periods of time overlap, there are indications of this historical progression within these messages to the churches. Here are a few of these apparent indications of the Church’s developing history:

Ephesus, the first church mentioned in the messages to the seven churches of Revelation, served as the center for John’s ministry at the end of the first century. The island of Patmos, where John received the vision recorded in the book of Revelation, was only 50 miles from Ephesus. It is well-known that John preached about love—some refer to him as the apostle of love—to help Christians at that time recapture their “first love” (Revelation 2:4; 1 John 3:10-11, 14, 16-18, 23).

Smyrna, the second church mentioned, was told that it would “have tribulation ten days” (Revelation 2:10). Commenting on this verse, Adam Clarke states: “As the days in this book are what is commonly called prophetic days, each answering to a year, the ten years of tribulation may denote ten years of persecution; and this was precisely the duration of the persecution under Diocletian, during which all the Asiatic Churches were grievously afflicted. Others understand the expression as implying frequency and abundance, as it does in other parts of Scripture” (*Adam Clarke Commentary*, Revelation 2:10).

Regardless of the exact meaning of “ten days” in Revelation 2:10, history shows that the Church of God faced great persecution in its earliest centuries. As shown, this is implied in the message to Smyrna and is also included in the third message (to Pergamos), in which God refers to “Antipas ... My faithful martyr” (Revelation 2:13).

The messages to the last four churches speak of Christ’s return—an indication that at least a remnant of Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia will still exist, along with Laodicea, in the end time (Revelation 2:25; Revelation 3:3, 11, 20). Indicating that the progression of history prior to Christ’s return has nearly run its course, Philadelphia is promised protection during “the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth” (Revelation 3:10).

Advice for Christians throughout the ages

A third way the messages to the seven churches can be understood is as advice and warnings to Christians throughout all ages. The responses of each church to the advice given can also be understood as attitudes. The relevance of these messages to Christians throughout history becomes obvious with the closing to each of the seven churches: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; Revelation 3:6, 13, 22).

While more complete explanations of the relevance of each message are available in the articles on each congregation, here is an abbreviated summary of the lessons we can learn from the instruction God gave each church:

- Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7): Don’t lose your love for God’s truth or His people.
- Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11): Remain faithful in the face of tribulation and poverty.
- Pergamos (Revelation 2:12-17): Resist Satan’s influence, even to death, if necessary.
- Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29): Resist false teaching.
- Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6): Remain zealous and pure in conduct.
- Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13): Persevere and walk through the doors God opens.
- Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22): Don’t become lukewarm about God’s way of life.

Abuse of church eras

Similar to the way much of the Bible’s teaching has been misunderstood and misapplied, some have misused the messages to the seven churches in claiming that their organization or group of people represents a particular church era, such as Philadelphia, and that other believers represent another era, such as Laodicea. No matter what humans may claim, we have to remember that Christ will be the ultimate Judge (Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31; 2 Timothy 4:1).

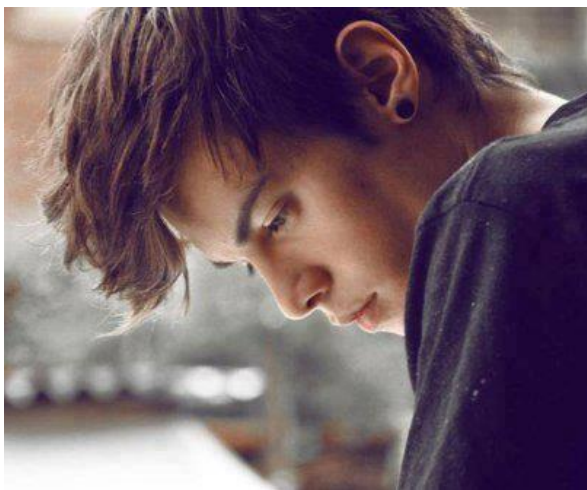
As for judging others to be Laodiceans, it is ironic to note that the nature of those in Laodicea was to misjudge their spiritual condition. Again, the timeless instruction for us today is to hear and apply all of the messages given to the churches. The wise course of action is to heed all of the messages and let Christ do the judging—a role He will most certainly fulfil!

Modern relevance of the messages

The messages to the seven churches of Revelation 2-3 show us that the Church of God and its members were destined to face many trials throughout the centuries before Jesus Christ would return. Yet God promised to reward His Church and individual members if they would remain faithful to Him.

These rewards include eating from the tree of life (Revelation 2:7), being given the crown of life (verse 10), being given a new name (verse 17), being given power over the nations (verse 26), having one's name written in the Book of Life (Revelation 3:5), becoming a pillar in God's temple (verse 12) and sitting with Christ on His throne (verse 21). This encouragement from God reminds us that serving Him is well worth the effort.

What are you doing with the spiritual knowledge you have received? Are you remaining faithful to what God has revealed? Continue reading the information on this website to learn more about God's way of life and how you can strengthen your relationship with God. You may find it especially helpful to study the sections on "The Church" and on "Christian Conversion."



Repentance, submission to Christ



Baptism by immersion, testimony of the new born in Christ

Christian Conversion

The apostle Peter preached that one needs to "repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). What did he mean, to be converted?

Many believe conversion is just accepting Jesus into your heart or professing Jesus with your mouth or giving your heart to the Lord. If you say the word “Jesus,” does that mean that from then on you are a born again Christian? What does it mean to be born again?

And just what is a Christian anyway? And what does conversion mean? Does conversion happen immediately or is it a process? Is the Holy Spirit involved? What about faith, repentance and baptism?

Many are unaware that the Bible is clear on what a Christian is and what conversion is. So regardless of what you have heard or been taught, open your Bibles and read for yourself the meaning of Christian conversion. The related articles will help you find the relevant passages in your Bible.



Christians gathering in house churches, world-wide today

**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
(John 3:16)**

One-thousand Years Millennium

Is the Bible's prediction about a thousand years of peace on earth real? What will the Millennium mean for you?

In an unstable world like ours today threatened by wars, terrorism, weather disturbances and natural disasters, the concept of a *1000 years* period of peace—often called the *Millennium*—fascinates us. It's not surprising that people should be curious about the future. What is surprising is how little true information is available about the Millennium spoken of in the Bible and how little most people understand about the topic.

The Bible is the only sure source of understanding on this topic; and it, in fact, has a lot to say about an upcoming 1000-year period of time. Yet the common English translations of the Scriptures don't use the term "millennium." And there are not that many explicit references to a "thousand years" in the Bible. Even so, the Scriptures do contain much information about the coming Millennium and an absolute assurance that it will come.

Let's take a look at those passages that speak of a "thousand years."

Psalms 90:4 tells us that "a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night." For God, the passage of time is different from the way we experience it. Being eternal, and not dependent on food, water and other physical factors, God views time differently.

The apostle Peter adds to the thought:

"But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8).

The first explicit statements that the Kingdom of God will reign on earth for a thousand years appear toward the end of the Bible, in the book of Revelation. Revelation 19 describes the return of Jesus Christ, coming in glory and power to take over the kingdoms of this world and to institute a new, just reign here on earth (verses 11-16). He will put down rebellion, remove the last human empire ruling on earth and institute the reign of the government of God for the 1000 years Millennium.

Satan bound

Next, we read of one of the first events to take place following the return of Jesus Christ the Messiah: “Then I [the apostle John] saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan , and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while” (Revelation 20:1-3).

Here we read for the first time of the duration of this initial phase of the reign of God on earth—1000 years! We are also given insight into why it will be a very good time: Satan the devil, the enemy of God and His plan, will be banished for those same 1000 years. Welcome to the Millennium!

Saints will rule

But let’s keep reading. John writes, “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them [the saints of God]. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years” (verse 4).

Here we see that the saints of God, those who refused to follow the beast power of the last days, will have the privilege of reigning with Jesus Christ for 1000 years.

“But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection” (verse 5).

Who are “the rest of the dead”? This will be the great majority of humanity (exclusive of the saints) who will have to wait in their graves for 1000 years until they are brought back to life in a resurrection separate and distinct from that of the saints. The “first resurrection” will take place at the return of Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17); a second resurrection will take place 1000 years later.

Which is better? The book of Revelation makes it clear: “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a

thousand years” (Revelation 20:6). Those resurrected in the first resurrection, at the beginning of the 1000 years Millennium, will no longer be subject to death.

Satan released

In verse 7 we read of the release of Satan the devil after the 1000 years Millennium is complete and how he will have one last chance to go out and deceive the nations of this world before being cast into the lake of fire and brimstone (verse 10-11).

Here in Revelation 20 we read the phrase “1000 years” six times. This chapter makes it clear there will indeed be a millennial reign of Jesus Christ on earth and that it will be a much better time than this age of man that precedes it.

More prophecies of the Millennium

But that’s by no means the whole story. Though the use of the phrase “thousand years” is limited, we read and learn wonderful facts about the coming Millennium in many other passages of the Bible.

Elsewhere—especially in the writings of the Old Testament prophets—we can read of the impact the ruling Kingdom of God will have during the Millennium in areas that include world peace, economic stability, the restoration of true education and right values, the role of the resurrected saints, the roles of various physical nations and even changes in the nature of animals.

The Millennium is going to be a wonderful and exciting time—something we can eagerly look forward to.

Does the Bible teach three resurrections?

In front of most traditional churches stands one or more crosses. This has become the quintessential symbol of professing Christianity, supposedly serving as a reminder of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

However, aside from its pagan overtones, it is used as a trite, superficial symbol that trivializes a pivotal event—Christ’s resurrection—into nothing more than a marketing gimmick.

In its simplest form, when the Bible references resurrections, it is referring to restoring life to someone after he has died. This could be from a physical death

to a physical life, or, as with Jesus Christ, from a physical death to spirit—the goal for all of God’s people and eventually mankind.

Like every other biblical truth, religions of this world blur, distort or hide the clear teachings of the resurrections as found in God’s Word. The confusion stems from their misunderstanding of resurrections, and of when and how often they occur.

The most known attempt to justify their understanding is the popular false doctrine of the immortal soul. This feeble effort does nothing but add confusion. Imagine one has within him an immortal soul—inherent life. What would be the need or purpose of a resurrection? Upon death, he would *already* be alive as a spirit being, “looking down from heaven,” as the thinking goes. This would mean that any resurrection would bring a supposed immortal spirit *back* to a PHYSICAL body! How awful! Freed from the bonds of the physical body, and supposedly living in heaven for decades, centuries or millennia, one would be forced to return to a physical form!

The Bible is Clear

God’s people understand that we do *not* have an immortal soul. When we die, we are dead.

But without a resurrection, each of us will simply *remain dead*!

God’s purpose for mankind, the reason for Christ’s Church, the truth of the gospel, warning the nations of Israel, and countless other doctrines would be irrelevant without a resurrection to eternal life (I Cor. 15:13-19). Christianity serves no purpose if nothing exists for us beyond this physical, limited and temporary life.

Clear instruction and basic logic did not stop false ministers in the first century from teaching against the concept or need for the resurrection.

However, Jesus was most plain—and repeated His teaching on the matter throughout the New Testament: “Marvel not at this [a growing number did!]: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, *and shall come forth*; they that have done good, unto the *resurrection of life*; and they that have done evil, unto the *resurrection of damnation*” (John 5:28-29).

As the Rock of the Old Testament (I Cor. 10:1-4), Christ also inspired the prophets and patriarchs to teach of a coming resurrection in Job 14:14-15 and Daniel 12:2.

As the “Firstborn among many brethren” (Rom. 8:29), Christ’s resurrection is extremely important for all true Christians. Many in the world understand Jesus’ death *paid* for our sins—but they miss the all-important reason for His resurrection: “We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, *we shall be saved by His life*” (Rom. 5:10).

Jesus Christ now lives in and through His servants (Gal. 2:20). God the Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit, resurrected Christ to a glorious spirit body—and will do the same for those following His truth and who live the way of “give.”

Three Resurrections

Much confusion has arisen about the purpose and number of resurrections, because most fail to understand that God’s plan is done decently and in order (I Cor. 15:22-23).

The First Resurrection will consist of 144,000 saints with whom God has been working for the last 6,000 years, those begotten with the Holy Spirit (vs. 20-23; also see I Thessalonians 4:16.) The term “First Resurrection” is found in Revelation 20:5-6, a wonderful moment that will usher in the Millennium.

Verse 5 also references the *Second* Resurrection in an inset or parenthetical thought: “But the *rest of the dead* lived not again until the thousand years were *finished*.” Obviously occurring after the Millennium, the magnitude of this event is almost impossible to comprehend. *Scores* of billions of people who have never understood or known the true God will be resurrected to physical life and given a chance to obey Him and develop His character. Read Revelation 20:13 to understand the colossal scope of this larger resurrection. Ezekiel 37:1-14 will further build a picture in your mind of all that will be needed as billions are resurrected and taught the truth. They will be given 100 years to grow in holy, righteous character and be born into the God’s Family as spirit beings (Isa. 65:20).

Regrettably, not everyone will be willing to obey God. After the 100 years, some few will actually *choose* the *Third* Resurrection. Both Daniel 12:2 and John 5:29 reference this event, but it is covered in more detail in the book of Revelation: “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the

second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:14-15).

Finally, notice that God mercifully erases even the memory of those who are cast into the lake of fire: “They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore have you visited and destroyed them, and made *all their memory to perish*” (Isa. 26:14).

But a loving, merciful God gives *every* human being a chance to be born into His Family.

Conclusion

The fact is that there is more than one book out of the 66 books of the Bible that portend the issues and happenings of the end times. Others which should be included in “end times study” are Daniel, Ezekiel, and Matthew. However, that said, why is it that some churches refuse to preach and/or teach about the book of the Revelation?

Perhaps they refuse because the Book of the Revelation is the conclusion of the grand story of God’s Word that began in the very first book of the Holy Bible which is the Book of Genesis. Actually, some churches feel that the Book of Revelation is too harsh on the way we live in our modern time. Why would that be you ask? For starters it lays out the events that will occur which will signal the beginning of the end. Why that is scary for some Christians who “say” they are true believers, and know that God is in control is somehow difficult for some to believe.

Many people and/or churches refuse to study the Book of Revelation for other reasons. Perhaps because its’ structure and symbolism make it more difficult to study than many other parts of the New Testament; or, Revelation is the book of the Bible where all of the loose “strings” of the story of the Gospel are resolved. However, those are poor excuses not to study this important book.

Another reason some will not study, preach or discuss the Book of Revelation is that in our modern lifestyles, we sometimes find it difficult to be told that we will be asked about our sins, standing before the Throne of God. Will we have the right answers? Remember, Scripture tells us God knows everything we do, think, say, and partake in! So there will be no pulling the wool over the eyes of the Almighty at our appointed time.

If we did not have the Book of Revelation in our Bible, all of these loose “strings” would be unresolved and incomplete. This book is one of hope and joy as we consider the glorious future that God has prepared for His children. All of the wrongs of this present world will be made right. All of our questions will be answered, and we will live for 1,000 years in a “perfect” world. The only laws we will have will be God’s law.

The Book of Revelation is Unveiling Jesus Christ

Revelation 1-3

- **Revelation 1:7** reveals the entire theme of the Book of Revelation, the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ. “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him...”
- Chapters 2 and 3 contain special messages written to the seven churches of Asia. After John was released from exile, he became the overseer of these churches and was able to personally deliver the messages from God to them.

Revelation 4-5

- We get a glimpse of heaven and see the worship of the One “who sits on the throne.” The cry goes out, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” No one in all of heaven and earth was found worthy to open the scroll until the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, stood in the midst of the throne.

Revelation 6

- In chapter 6 the Lamb looses the seals, revealing the four horsemen of the apocalypse, the souls under the altar and the heavens departing like a scroll.

Revelation 7

- Chapter seven describes the sealing of the 144,000 to protect them from the calamities to come.
- The later part of the chapter describes those that have come out of great tribulation. “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (**Revelation 7:14**).

Revelation 8-11

- Five of the first six trumpets reveal great catastrophes upon the nations, but the people still do not repent.
- The sounding of the seventh trumpet in **Revelation 11:15** signals the time when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of Jesus Christ. This includes the Battle of Armageddon and the second coming of Christ. The Bible states that at this time men will finally repent and give glory to God. This seventh trumpet is the “last trump” referred to in **1 Corinthians 15:52**.

Revelation 12

- **Revelation 12** describes a woman with twelve stars about her head. The woman is depicted in the throes of childbirth. The dragon, Satan, stands before the woman to devour the child as soon as he is born. The woman is Israel, and the twelve stars symbolize the twelve tribes of Israel. The child is Jesus. Herod the Great did attempt to kill Jesus just as soon as He was born; however, he failed.
- The narrative of Revelation 12 then jumps 2,000 years. Satan wages war against the forces of God in heaven but is defeated. Satan is cast out of heaven with his angels and confined to the earth. The dragon then wages war against Israel, but Israel is protected by the wings of a great eagle. A beast rises from the sea, a confederation of world empires led by the Antichrist. Another beast comes out of the earth, appearing as a lamb, but speaking like the devil. This second beast, the False Prophet, deceives the people of the earth influencing them to worship the Antichrist.

Revelation 13

- This chapter depicts the Antichrist and his one-world government. It also describes the Antichrist’s religious partner, the False Prophet. In the latter part of the chapter, the economic system of the endtime, called the “mark of the beast” is described.

Revelation 14

- The 144,000 of Revelation 14 are redeemed, undefiled, blameless and protected by God. **Revelation 14:8** announces that Babylon the Great has fallen because it made all the world commit spiritual adultery. Chapter 14 tells of the reaping of the harvest of the earth—the rapture of the church. Then there is another harvest, the “reaping of the vine of the earth,” to be

thrown into the winepress of the wrath of God. This speaks of the Battle of Armageddon.

Revelation 15

- **Revelation 15** introduces the seven angels having the seven last plagues. It states that in these plagues “is filled up the wrath of God.” **Revelation 16**
- This chapter records the pouring out of the final seven plagues (the vials). Verses 12-16 record the preparations for the Battle of Armageddon. The seventh vial is the same as the sixth and seventh seal and the seventh trumpet.

Revelation 17-18

- **Revelation 16:16-19** introduces Armageddon and the judgment of the false religious system called Mystery Babylon. God so hates false religion that He spends chapters 17 and 18 on the judgment “the great whore.” God always uses a woman to symbolize a church. He uses a virgin to symbolize His true church, and a harlot to symbolize the false compromised church of the endtime.

Revelation 19

- After spending two chapters on the judgment against the false church, God proceeds to describe His marriage to the true church. “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.” After the marriage, Jesus proceeds to the earth to fight the Battle of Armageddon and to set up His kingdom.

Revelation 20

- After Armageddon, Satan is bound for the next 1,000 years. After the thousand-year period has ended, Satan will be released to deceive the nations again. Satan is finally cast into the lake of fire, to be tormented forever. The books are opened for the final judgment, and all are judged according to their deeds. (**Revelation 20:12**) Those whose names are not found written in the Lamb’s Book of Life are cast into the lake of fire, where Satan and his angels are in eternal torment. The only way to get your name in the Lamb’s Book of Life is to be born again, as depicted in **Acts 2:38**, “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one

of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Revelation 21

- John states that there will be a new heaven and a new earth. He is told that the New Jerusalem is the bride, the Lamb’s wife. The New Jerusalem is then described in great detail.

Revelation 22

- This final chapter of Revelation summarizes the goal of the entire book. It describes the river of life and the tree of life that will be in the New Jerusalem. It also states that those who hear the sayings of the book of Revelation will be blessed. A dual warning is given. If any person adds to the things written in the book of Revelation, God will add to that person the plagues that are written in the book. If anyone takes away from the book of Revelation, God will take away his name from the book of life. Finally, in this concluding chapter, God emphasizes the central message of the book by saying three times, “Behold, I come quickly.”



Main study books the preacher should have on his bookshelves

Thompson Chain-Reference Study Bible

This was my first study Bible I ever bought in London before I entered the Brussels Bible Institute in 1960. A Thompson study Bible will help you in ways other Bibles cannot. It's the unique "Chain-Reference System" that allows you to follow any subject, person, place or idea, from the front of your Bible to the end. Thompson Bible users say it's the best way to study your Bible. No other Bible has this superb, patented, "Chain-Reference System" developed by Dr. Frank C. Thompson in 1890. Since that time, the publisher, Kirkbride Bible Company, has been adding thousands of additional topics and links. The Thompson you buy today has over 100,000 links covering over 7,000 topics. Every page is stuffed with treasure. Your Thompson Study Bible will become a trusted friend.

The Thompson Chain-Reference Bible comes with extras found only in premium study Bibles like gold-foil gilded pages and silk ribbon bookmarks. Your Thompson Bible can also be personalized with your name in gold on the cover. For super-swift researching you can order your Thompson "thumb indexed."

Life Application Study Bible NKJV, by Tyndale House Publishers Staff.

Overview

This best-selling study Bible is now available in the New King James Version. It contains thousands of Life Application Notes to help readers apply the truths of God's Word to everyday life. Includes book introductions, in-text maps and charts, personality profiles, and more.

Features

- Words of Jesus featured in red lettering
- Dictionary/concordance
- Daily reading plan
- Blueprint and Megathemes for each book
- Topical index
- Tyndale House Publishers

Hebrew-Greek Key Word Study Bible-KJV, AMG Publishers, 1-jun.-2008 - 2284 pages

This Bible is beautiful. Excellent quality. I purchased the KJV. I love the notes and Strong's numbers throughout the text. This Bible can stand alone with the Strong's reference in the back and is helpful with my more comprehensive Strong's concordance. The only negative, in my opinion, are the occasional statements "this word or phrase was not in the original Hebrew/Greek". Good example is in Ephesians where the note states that the original text didn't say that the book was addressed to the saints which are at Ephesus. To me, that discredits the text instead of helping me understand it more. However, as previously stated, I really do appreciate this work. True Value. I would highly recommend. From what I've read so far, 99.9% of the notes offer excellent insights and are solid in doctrine.

This is probably the best study Bible out, for many reasons. I bought this Bible (KJV AMG) in early 2013 and read through it in a few months. After I finished it, I put it on my shelf and moved on to other study Bibles. I have many study Bibles, but it is hard to find one that has everything a serious student of the Bible wants when studying God's Word (I will list what I mean at the bottom of this review). So, I often buy different study Bibles to compliment each other because each one usually excels in a few categories, but fails in others. I recently (early 2014) took this Bible off my shelf to compare it to my interlinear Bible, and as I took another look at it, I realized I had purchased a gem of a Bible! This is truly a complete study Bible with all the necessary study material under one cover; it is truly amazing if you actually use the material it provides you with.

The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, by James Strong, LL.D, S.T.D.
(Nelson Reference & Electronic)

The Strong's Exhaustive Concordance is the most complete, easy-to-use, and understandable concordance for studying the original languages of the Bible. Combining the text of the King James Bible with the power of the Greek and Hebrew Lexicons, any student or pastor can gain a clear understanding of the Word to enrich their study.

Due to the helpful nature of the Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, we have incorporated this tool into our Online Study Bible search engine, enhancing it's usefulness.

You can access Strong's Concordance by searching in the search box below and choosing the King James Version or New American Standard Bible. Once you are within a Bible reference, check the "Strongs

Numbers" at the top right of your reading pane to view the Hebrew and Greek lexicons using Strong's Concordance numbers.

You can also browse through Strong's concordance numbers by navigating to the King James Version translation or New American Standard Bible translation and checking "Strong's Numbers".

New Bible Commentary, Consulting Editors: D.A. Carson, R.T. France, J.A. Motyer & G.J. Wenham (Reference Collection).

A completely new edition of this well-established one-volume commentary on the whole Bible from a team of international contributors. Based on the New International Version. New features include a wide range of maps, diagrams and further-reading lists. Hardcover 1455 Pages

Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible, Complete and Unabridged.(Hendrikson Publishers).

Matthew Henry (1662–1714) has been known and loved for three centuries for his devotional commentary on the Bible. It has not been generally known that he was also a distinguished preacher. He began preaching at twenty-four years old and held pastorates until his death. The greatness of his sermons consists in their scriptural content, lucid presentation, practical application, and Christ-centeredness.

This is the only complete and unabridged one-volume edition of Matthew Henry's famous work.

Now, this classic volume has been re-typset and features a slimmer and handier trim size and an attractive new cover.

“First among the mighty (commentaries) for general usefulness we are bound to mention the man whose name is a household word, Matthew Henry. He is the most pious and pithy, sound and sensible, suggestive and sober, terse and trustworthy . . . he is deeply spiritual, heavenly, profitable; finding good matter in every text, and from all deducting the most practical and judicious lessons . . . It is the Christian's companion, suitable to everybody, instructive to all.” (Charles H. Spurgeon).

From Genesis to Revelation, Matthew Henry successfully combines practical application, devotional insight, and scholarship on the entire Bible. Henry has profound insights on the content, message and nature of God's divine revelation. Perfect for all readers of the Bible who want a convenient, comprehensive commentary.

Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament, by W.E. Vine. Old Testament edited by F.F.Bruce. (Fleming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan, New Jersey, U.S.A

This convenient one volume combines Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words and Unger and White's Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament. This book allows you to easily access the alphabetized English equivalents of the Greek or Hebrew words from which they are translated. Throughout the text the most significant biblical words are illustrated by Scripture passages, comments, cross-references, ancient and modern meanings, precise etymologies, historical notes, and clearly defined technical information. Each original language is indexed, and the addition of a topical index allows you to access all the dictionary entries pertinent to specific New Testament ideas and teachings. Keyed to Strong's.

The Zondervan "Parallel New Testament in Greek and English, the interlinear Greek-English New Testament (NIV and KJV).

The NIV Greek and English New Testament is a parallel Bible, with the Greek New Testament on the left-hand page (using the text that underlies the NIV 2011) and the NIV 2011 on the right-hand page. The Greek text includes footnotes that relate to other Greek New Testaments, and the NIV has the footnotes readers have come to expect and rely on. Section headings are identical in both editions for easy reference. Additional features of the NIV Greek and English New Testament include: Side-by-side format (Greek text on one page with NIV on the facing page) Greek text formatted to match the NIV text Single column format Words of Christ in black Presentation page Ribbon marker (leather edition only) Maps

Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties, by Gleason L. Archer (Regency Reference Library, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

(Surfing on Internet, I saw that the book can be downloaded.)

Clear, scholarly answers to apparent discrepancies in the Bible, confirming that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. Over the centuries and still at the present time, Christians—from scholars and students to people in the pew—have been troubled by vexing questions and apparent contradictions in the Bible. In this encyclopedia of Bible difficulties, Dr. Gleason Archer offers carefully thought-out arguments for the unity and integrity of the Bible that should convince the skeptic and reassure the person who may be confused by the seeming discrepancies in Scripture. Dr. Archer's answers are sometimes simple insights that seem afterward to have been obvious all along. But more often his answers are based on a careful study of the meaning of words, the cultural context of Bible eras, knowledge of the Hebrew numbering system, and many other details not readily known to the average Bible reader.

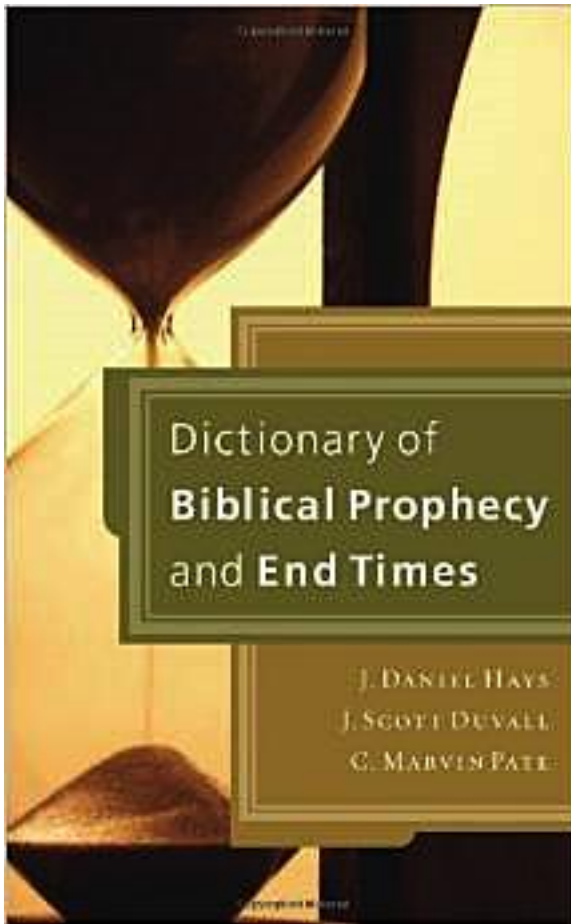
New Dictionary of Theology, Editors: Sinclair B. Ferguson, David F. Wright, and Consulting editor: J.L.Packer. (IVP)

Since its publication, the *New Dictionary of Theology* has rapidly established itself as a standard, authoritative reference work in systematic and historical theology. More than 630 articles cover a variety of theological themes, thinkers and movements: From creation to the millennium; from Abelard to Zwingli; from Third World liberation theology to South African Dutch Reformed theology. Firmly anchored in the evangelical tradition, the *NDOT* is nevertheless wide-ranging in its scope. Over 200 contributors, experts in their individual fields, offer both Western and international perspective. Concise and comprehensive, biblically grounded and historically informed, even-handed and free from unduly technical language, this dictionary has been praised by general readers, pastors and scholars.

New Dictionary of Theology

- **Editors:** Sinclair B. Ferguson, David F. Wright
- **Consulting Editor:** J. I. Packer
- **Publisher:** InterVarsity Press (1988)

Dictionary of Biblical Prophecy and End Times, by J. Daniel Hays, J. Scott Duvall and C. Marvin Pate

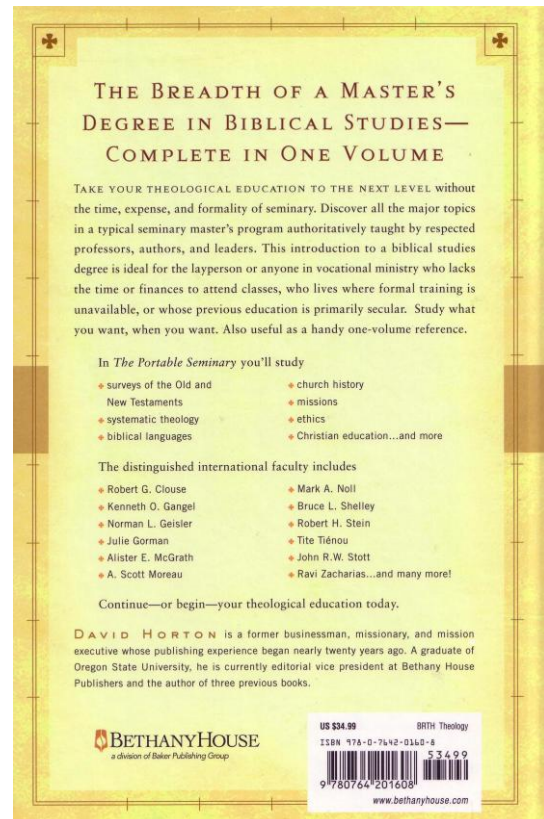
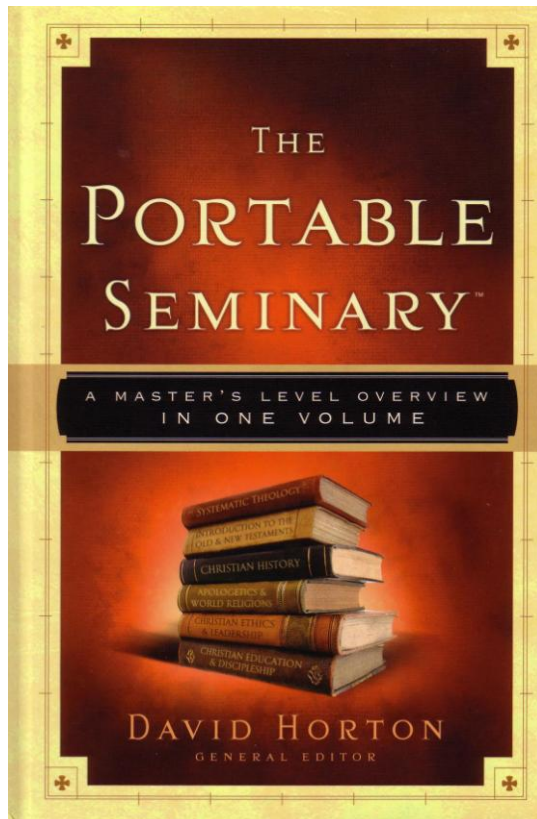


All you wanted to know about biblical prophecy from A to Z, the Dictionary of Biblical Prophecy is a comprehensive reference tool. It is targeted for those who truly desire to understand prophecy and the end-times. Starting with 'Abomination of Desolation' and continuing through hundreds of articles until 'Zionism,' this book provides helpful and interesting discussions of the entire range of biblical prophecy, all at your fingertips. This exhaustive work contains articles on a broad sweep of topics relevant to the study of biblical prophecy and eschatology. The articles are based on solid scholarship, yet are clear and accessible to the lay reader, illuminating even the most complicated issues. The dictionary also strives for a balanced presentation by laying out differing positions along with their strengths and weaknesses, while not

pushing any specific theological or interpretive agenda other than a firm commitment to seeking to understand the Scriptures. This is a valuable tool you will refer to time and again.

Our Bible Studies on Internet

We are looking around for a new website entirely of our own.



Recommended

Read the Bible Online

In English

King James Version (Public Domain Version)

<http://www.allonlinebible.com/>

In Dutch

<http://www.online-bijbel.nl/>

In French

Version Louis Segond (Normalement Domaine Publique)

<http://www.christianevents.mu/lire-bible-francais-louis-segond.html>

Contents

Introduction	2
Biblical Prophecies for our generation	3
The Rebirth of Israel	4
Predictions about the present Arab-Israeli conflict	5
The miraculous restoration of the Hebrew Language	5
The return of the Ethiopian Jews to Israel	6
The astonishing fertility of Israel	7
Israel's plans to rebuild the temple	8
Vessels for the Future Temple Worship	9
The revival of the Roman Empire; Rebuilding of Babylon	10
One world government	11
Deadly pestilence	12
World famine	13
The rise in major "killer" Earthquakes; Preparation Mark of the Beast	14
Wordwide television communication	15
The Islamic State and Bible Prophecy	16
Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world	17
Knowledge and travel shall increase in the Last Days	17
Preparations for the Battle of Armageddon	18
A military highway across Asia and the drying up of the Euphrates river	19
The staggering odds against these prophecies being fulfilled in our lifetime	20
Brief history of Kings and Prophets for memory	22
The importance of studying Biblical Prophecy of the Second Coming	25
At the missionary journey of Paul	25
The sending of the letter to the Church of Thessalonica	26
The maturity of the Christians in the Church of Thessalonica	26
The Old Testament in general on the Second Coming of Christ	28
Jesus' Teaching on the Second Coming	31
The Apostles' teaching on the Second Coming	35
The future plan of God for the Church	39
The Great Judgment Seat of Christ	41
Presentation of the Bride to the Lord Jesus Christ through the Purging Process	45
The biblical and prophetic vocabulary	47
Prophetic Sacred Words	48
Prophetic Deeds	50
The Prophetic Books of the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh) Old Testament	50

Prophets and their prophecies in the Old Testament	52
Prophets and their prophecies in the New Testament	55
The Perspective of Prophecy	56
Bible Verses about Prophecy	60
Ten prophecies about Jesus' birth	73
Isaiah's prophecies	74
Messianic Prophecy in Isaiah	76
Forty-four prophecies fulfilled in Jesus Christ	77
Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah	80
The Messiah would be a descendant of David	81
The messiah would be God	83
Additional fulfillment examples	85
The Messiah would be both God and Man	86
The Messiah would be born of a virgin	88
The Messiah would be the New Covenant	89
The Messiah would be a descendant of David	91
The Davidic Covenant in Jeremiah 33	94
Jeremiah chapter 33	96
Maranatha – Jesus Comes	100
Revelation Book of Hope and Warning	104
The Statement of Faith of the Berea School of Theology and Ministries on Internet	107
Key Characters in the Book of Revelation	108
The Message of the Book of Revelation part of the Johnnic Writings	110
Instruction for the first-century seven churches	112
Progressive history of the Church	112
How is the book of Revelation laid out?	114
What are these seven seals on the scroll about? And, description	115
The four horsemen of the Apocalypse (the four first seals)	116
Fifth seal: tribulation, etc.	119
Is there a major theme to the book of Revelation?	121
The first four of the seven seals (four horsemen)	121
Christ opens the seals	122
What are the seven trumpets of Revelation	124
Seven Trumpets Purpose	125
Worldwide earthquake	125
First Trumpet, etc.	125
What are the seven plagues of Revelation	127
What does Christ intend we <i>do</i> with this information He has revealed	127
Advice for churches, communities, fellowships, house churches;	
Progressive history of the Church	128
Advice for Christians throughout the ages	130

Modern relevance of the messages	131
Christian conversion	131
One-thousand years millennium	133
Satan bound; Saints will rule	134
Satan released	135
More prophecies of the Millennium	135
Does the Bible teach three resurrections	135
The Bible is clear	136
Three resurrections	137
Conclusion	138
The Book of Revelation is unveiling Jesus Christ (chapters briefly)	138
Main study books the preacher should have on his bookshelves	143
Reading the Bible On-line (English, Dutch and French)	149
Contents	150



“Look unto Jesus”

**© January 2015 – Berea School of Theology and Internet Ministries,
 Superintendent: Reverend Philippe L. De Coster, B.Th., D.D.
 Ghent, Belgium
 (Non-commercial)**